

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2021

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on Imposing Sanctions on Foreign Persons
Involved in the Global Illicit Drug Trade**

December 15, 2021

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Madam President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order imposing sanctions on foreign persons involved in the global illicit drug trade.

I have determined that the trafficking into the United States of illicit drugs, including fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, is causing the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans annually, as well as non-fatal overdoses with their own tragic human toll. Drug cartels, transnational criminal organizations, and their facilitators are the primary sources of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals that fuel the current opioid epidemic, as well as drug-related violence that harms our communities. I find that international drug trafficking—including the illicit production, global sale, and widespread distribution of illegal drugs; the rise of extremely potent drugs such as fentanyl and other synthetic opioids; as well as the growing role of Internet-based drug sales—constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. This serious threat requires our country to modernize and update our response to drug trafficking. I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Kamala D. Harris, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Global illicit drug trade, U.S. sanctions on foreign persons involved, letter.

Subjects: Drug abuse and trafficking : Foreign narcotics traffickers; Drug abuse and trafficking : Illegal drugs, interdiction efforts.

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