

HALT FENTANYL ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, later today, the Senate will vote on passage of the HALT Fentanyl Act. Opioid addiction has had a devastating impact on communities all across the country.

We have an overdose crisis in the United States, and we should be doing everything possible to combat it. In just a decade, fentanyl has emerged as the deadliest drug in American history. All it takes is 2 milligrams—that is a fraction of the size of a penny—to cause an overdose.

But we must do more than simply pass this bill. Since fentanyl-related substances were originally scheduled by the DEA, in 2018, Congress has never allowed this authority to expire. So, by passing this bill, we are merely maintaining the status quo. We must also address how this poison gets into the hands of the most vulnerable: our children. Too often, fentanyl is peddled in the open on some of the world's largest social media platforms.

When the Senate Judiciary Committee marked up the HALT Fentanyl Act last month, I filed amendments that would finally hold these companies accountable and demand they put safeguards in place to protect our children. One of my amendments would have repealed the liability shield that Congress granted Big Tech nearly 30 years ago, known as section 230.

At that markup, Chairman GRASSLEY agreed to work with me to finally—finally—allow these companies to be sued by their victims' families so they can be held accountable in a court of law. I hope the full Senate will join us in this effort. Enough teens have died due to Big Tech's deliberate indifference.

If we are going to stem the fentanyl crisis, we also must acknowledge the role the United States has played in arming cartels to the teeth—sending hundreds of thousands of firearms south in an “iron river”—and facilitating the cartels' use of violence to traffic fentanyl into the U.S. That is why I filed my Stop Arming Cartels Act as an amendment to this bill.

The HALT Fentanyl Act fails to account for the role that America's lax gun laws play in arming and enabling drug cartels to traffic fentanyl. Consider this: An estimated 200,000 to 500,000 American-made guns are trafficked into Mexico annually. A study by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives found that 70 percent of crime guns recovered in Mexico from 2014–2018 and submitted for tracing were from the United States.

My Stop Arming Cartels Act would prohibit future manufacture, sale, and possession of .50-caliber rifles—a particularly powerful weapon favored by Mexican drug cartels. These high-caliber weapons smuggled from the United States have allowed cartels to shoot down police helicopters, attack military convoys, and undercut public faith in law and order. My bill would also

allow victims of gun violence to sue manufacturers and dealers who engage in firearm transactions prohibited under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act.

We also must provide local and Federal law enforcement with the resources they need to fight against the highly armed cartels.

These Agencies are on the frontlines protecting our communities from fentanyl and other opioids. But detection is getting more difficult. Fentanyl is so potent and moved in quantities so small that high-value shipments are easily hidden. As a result, law enforcement needs access to technology and resources to quickly and efficiently detect these drugs. This includes expanding nonintrusive inspection capabilities, making lifesaving Naloxone widely available, and adequately funding State and local law enforcement.

I am also gravely concerned about the negative impact of President Trump's recent order diverting Federal law enforcement agents, including from the DEA and ATF, away from combatting fentanyl and firearms trafficked by cartels and onto working on the President's mass deportation efforts. As a reminder, the vast majority of fentanyl and other illegal drugs entering the United States are smuggled by American citizens through legal ports of entry. And lastly, I am concerned about the negative impact of President Trump's mass removals and reassignments of senior career law enforcement at DOJ and FBI and how that will affect our ability to hold traffickers accountable and cut off the supply of fentanyl.

Today, I will vote for the HALT Fentanyl Act. Still, it is only a starting point, and there is so much more that we can do, like stopping the trafficking of American guns that arm the cartels and holding social media companies accountable for peddling fentanyl to our kids. Getting fentanyl off the streets is a herculean task that will require us all to come together and work across the aisle to make this country a healthier, safer place to live. I hope this bill is a sign that all of my Senate colleagues are willing to continue working on this task with me in the future.

 JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, on January 6, 2021, a solemn constitutional proceeding was disrupted when a mob of thugs, egged on by President Trump, attacked and trashed the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn a free and fair election.

The grimmest results of the insurrection were the subsequent deaths of five of our law enforcement officers and the injuries to approximately 140 others, many of whom are still paying the price for that day.

On the campaign trail, Donald Trump promised that he would pardon January 6 insurrectionists—but it still came

as a shock when, on the first day of his second Presidential term, he issued a blanket pardon and 14 commutations to all of those who had been charged or convicted for their involvement in the attack on the Capitol.

And listen to what President Trump said about his pardons at a recent press conference “I pardoned people who were assaulted themselves. They were assaulted by our government . . . They didn't assault. They were assaulted, and what I did was a great thing for humanity.”

Trump's decision is highly unpopular, with 83 percent of Americans opposed to these pardons. This includes 70 percent of those who lean Republican.

And not only that, but these pardons also highlight the hypocrisy of President Trump when it comes to his claimed crackdown on antisemitism. Just days after pardoning these rioters, he signed an Executive order outlining his administration's efforts to combat “the explosion of antisemitism” in the U.S..

But, many of the rioters who Trump pardoned openly embrace violent antisemitism. Take Robert Keith Parker, who wore a black hoodie emblazoned with “Camp Auschwitz” on that horrific day.

Robert Keith Parker was pardoned by President Trump.

Or consider Timothy Hale-Cusanelli, whom prosecutors identified as a “white supremacist and Nazi sympathizer.” He told his coworkers that “Hitler should have finished the job” and frequently dresses up as Adolf Hitler.

At Hale-Cusanelli's sentencing hearing, Judge Trevor McFadden, a Trump appointee, said “Statements and actions like yours make [Jewish people] less safe and less confident they can participate as equal members of our society.”

Timothy Hale-Cusanelli was pardoned by President Trump. And what is more? After his release from prison, Mr. Hale-Cusanelli was welcomed as a speaker at two events held by the President's supporters last year at his Bedminster club.

At one of these events, he received an award from Ed Martin, now serving as President Trump's interim U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia. Mr. Martin called Hale-Cusanelli an “extraordinary man” and an “extraordinary leader.”

Does that sound like the actions of an administration that cares about protecting the Jewish community from antisemitism? Seems more like lip service to me.

But the hypocrisy doesn't end there. President Donald Trump, in his speech to the joint session of Congress last week, said he would, “Get police officers nationwide the support, protection, and respect they so dearly deserve.” He said those words in a chamber that was protected by the very officers who were violently assaulted on January 6 by the rioters who he egged on and later pardoned.

Trump talks a big game about “backing the blue—but his pardons of the very rioters who beat and brutalized hundreds of cops on January 6 show that he has no idea what “support, protection, and respect” for the police means.

He continues to tout bringing back “law and order” while releasing violent criminals onto the streets—the scope of his dangerous pardons continues to grow.

Two weeks ago, a Justice Department prosecutor struggled in court to explain the administration’s view of the scope of Trump’s mass pardons, arguing that the relief should apply to separate criminal conduct committed by Capitol rioter Dan Wilson, in Kentucky in 2023.

U.S. District Judge Dabney L. Friedrich, a Trump appointee, questioned a Justice Department attorney about the government’s shifting position on the scope of Trump’s January 6 pardons.

Judge Freidrich said, “[p]ardons have to have a fixed meaning” on the day they are issued, and there has to be a “clear definition of the pardon that doesn’t evolve or change.”

Unfortunately, these individuals continue to pose a dangerous threat to our democracy—and law enforcement.

Just last month, dozens of former January 6 offenders joined forces on social media to compile and publicize the identities of at least 124 individuals who had been involved in their cases—including prosecutors, judges, and FBI agents.

The post, which has received at least tens of thousands of views, includes names, photos, disparaging remarks, and demands for accountability.

In January, another pardoned January 6 defendant who pleaded guilty to assaulting police officers with pepper spray, Ryan Nichols, Sr., identified in a Twitter post “officers in the D.C. Jail who need to be investigated for corruption and abuse,” adding the names and LinkedIn profile photos of two DC Jail employees.

The men and women who bravely defended us on January 6 deserve better than this—and we should honor them for their heroic efforts that day, not excuse the thugs who attacked this body and the ideals it represents.

Law enforcement officials should not fear for their safety or that of their

families just for simply doing their jobs.

I hope that all of us, regardless of our political persuasion, can agree on two things: that violence has no place in a democracy, and that our law enforcement officers are worthy of our respect and support.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, BBEDCA, establishes statutory limits on discretionary spending and allows for various adjustments to those limits. In addition, sections 302 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 allow the chairman of the Budget Committee to establish and revise allocations, aggregates, and levels consistent with those adjustments.

The Senate will soon consider H.R. 1968, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025. The measure provides full-year appropriations for 2025 and contains spending that qualifies for cap adjustments under BBEDCA.

First, H.R. 1968 includes appropriations designated as emergency funding pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of BBEDCA. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the bill’s emergency-designated spending amounts to \$12.375 million in nonsecurity budget authority and \$8,600 million in associated outlays in 2025.

Second, the measure also includes \$22,884 million in nonsecurity discretionary budget authority designated for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of BBEDCA. This budget authority is expected to result in \$963 million in outlays in 2025.

Third, the measure includes appropriations for certain program integrity activities that qualify for adjustments pursuant to sections 251(b)(2)(B), 251(b)(2)(C), and 251(b)(2)(E) of BBEDCA. The adjustments for these activities amount to \$2,531 million in nonsecurity budget authority and \$1,894 million in resulting outlays for 2025.

Finally, H.R. 1968 includes \$2,750 million in nonsecurity budget authority for wildfire suppression operations pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(F) of BBEDCA, which is associated with \$945 million in outlays.

In total, the adjustments for H.R. 1968 amount to \$40,540 million in non-security budget authority and \$12,402 million in outlays.

I am also filing adjustments to reflect the emergency designations in two bills enacted last year: the Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, P.L. 118–83, and the American Relief Act, 2025, P.L. 118–158. Together, the emergency-designated appropriations in these bills increase security category budget authority by \$11,775 million, nonsecurity category budget authority by \$105,395 million, and total outlays by \$26,511 million.

Consequently, I am revising the budget authority and outlay allocations to the Committee on Appropriations by increasing revised security budget authority by \$11,775 million, revised nonsecurity budget authority by \$145,935 million, and outlays by \$38,913 million in fiscal year 2025. I am also increasing the budgetary aggregates for fiscal year 2025 by \$157,374 million in budget authority and \$38,611 million in outlays.

I ask unanimous consent that this notice and the accompanying tables, which provide details about the adjustment, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REVISIONS TO BUDGET AGGREGATES

(Pursuant to Section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974) (\$ in billions)

Table with 2 columns: Category and 2025. Rows include Current Spending Aggregates (Budget Authority, Outlays), Adjustment (Budget Authority, Outlays), and Revised Aggregates (Budget Authority, Outlays).

REVISIONS TO THE SPENDING ALLOCATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

(Pursuant to Section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974) (\$ in billions)

Table with 4 columns: Category, Current Allocation, Adjustments, Revised Allocation. Rows include Revised Security Budget Authority, Revised Nonsecurity Budget Authority, and General Purpose Outlays.

DETAIL OF ADJUSTMENTS TO FISCAL YEAR 2025 ALLOCATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(Pursuant to Section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974) (\$ in billions)

Table with 6 columns: Detail of Adjustments Made Above, Emergency, Disaster Relief, Program Integrity, Wildfire Suppression, Total. Rows include Revised Security Budget Authority, Revised Nonsecurity Budget Authority, and General Purpose Outlays.

Note: Of the program integrity amounts, \$336 million of budget authority and \$252 million of outlays are from the Disability Insurance Trust Fund and are off-budget. The off-budget amounts are not included in the adjustment to the budget aggregates.

HALT FENTANYL ACT

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I voted today to oppose cloture to end debate on the HALT Fentanyl Act. Our Nation and my State of Maryland

are experiencing a crisis with synthetic opioids like fentanyl and related drugs, and I strongly support action to combat drug trafficking and prevent overdoses. We need public health solu-

tions that will help American families and our communities, but instead, the bill before us could lead to harmful unintended consequences, including limiting the potential for less addictive