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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Urges Department of State to Fight International Fentanyl Production and Importation

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today urged the U.S. Department of State to take a tougher approach to stemming the influx of deadly fentanyl into Florida and the nation as a whole. There is evidence that China is shipping precursor chemicals for fentanyl into Mexico for drug cartels to produce the lethal drug and smuggle it overland into the U.S. In a letter sent to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Attorney General Moody, with 15 other attorneys general, urged Blinken to take a tougher stance on stopping the influx of fentanyl from China and Mexico.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Our federal government cannot sit idly by as China ships chemicals to produce highly lethal fentanyl to Mexico to funnel it into our country. Today, I’m calling on Secretary Blinken and the U.S. Department of State to crack down on both countries, who have formed an international triangle of death where thousands of pounds of deadly opioid drugs are flooding into our streets. This must end, now.”

Following pressure from the federal government, China began taking action against illicit fentanyl manufacturing within its borders in 2019. However, Chinese labs instead are diverting precursor chemicals for fentanyl manufacturing to other countries, including Mexico.

Fentanyl is smuggled into the U.S. from Mexico in alarming quantities. According to DOS, seizures of fentanyl directly shipped from China to the U.S. shrunk dramatically from more than 128 kilograms seized in 2017 to less than half a kilogram in 2020.

Today, most fentanyl available in the U.S. is trafficked from Mexico across the U.S. Southern Border. Seizures of fentanyl at the border increased from approximately 1,187 kilograms in 2019 to approximately 2,939 kilograms in 2020.

Florida has particular interest in stopping the flow of deadly fentanyl into the state, where the drug killed more than 5,000 Floridians in 2020, according to the 2020 Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s Medical Examiner’s Report.

Attorney General Moody and the attorneys general of the following states signed on to the letter: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas and West Virginia.

To view a copy of the letter, click here.