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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Calls to Restore ONDCP Cabinet Post



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—As record amounts of fentanyl continue to flood across the U.S. Southwest Border and fuel the deadly opioid crisis, Attorney General Ashley Moody is calling on President Joe Biden to restore the Director for the Office of the National Drug Control Policy position to a cabinet-level post. This comes as Title 42 is set to expire this week, which will fuel a massive border surge and allow even more deadly fentanyl to flood into the country.

Since President Biden took office, authorities seized nearly 23,000 pounds of the deadly drug, enough to kill the entire U.S. population more than 15 times over. Drug overdose deaths are also skyrocketing—more than 100,000 occurred last year alone. As Biden keeps refusing to take the opioid crisis seriously and secure the border, others should be empowered to protect the American people. Attorney General Moody is urging the president to elevate the ONDCP Director position to bring more accountability and expand the office's flexibility to combat illicit fentanyl and save lives.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The opioid crisis, fueled by illicit fentanyl from Mexico, continues to rage, killing tens of thousands of Americans every year. With Title 42 set to expire this week, we can only imagine how much more fentanyl will make it across the border under the cover of a massive migration surge. I am demanding that the president take this crisis seriously, and work to stop the large amounts of this deadly drug flooding into our country, including restoring the nation's drug czar position back to a cabinet post."

In a letter to President Biden, Attorney General Moody calls for the position of ONDCP Director

to be moved to a cabinet-level post. In 2009, while Biden served as Vice President, the Obama administration removed the ONDCP Director from a cabinet-level position to a presidential appointment, inhibiting the coordination of the country's priorities and policies for fighting illicit drugs.

This transfer will bring accountability and provide the office flexibility in fighting the influx of fentanyl across the border. The move would elevate the drug czar to better serve as a check on the administration's terrible immigration policies fueling the opioid crisis. This action is needed now as Title 42 is set to expire. The rule's expiration brings the potential for a massive migrant surge, which could fuel even more of the lethal substance to be smuggled into the country.

Fentanyl is now the number one killer of adults aged 18-45. Synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, killed more than 71,000 people in the U.S. in 2021. The drug is not only lethal to adults, but to teenagers as well—fentanyl-related deaths among teens increased 168% last year, with 680 deaths nationwide.

In the letter to the president, Attorney General Moody points out that Biden failed to discuss illicit fentanyl and China's role in supplying Mexican drug cartels with the synthetic opioid's precursors in a meeting with China's president Xi Jinping on Nov. 14.

The letter states: "If you continue to refuse to address this issue on an international level—where certainly ground could be gained—at least step aside and allow a qualified drug czar the independence needed to act in the best interest of Americans…As someone who spent his time in the United States Senate not only advocating for the ONDCP but coining the term drug czar, why have you not taken action?"

To view the full letter, click here.

Attorney General Moody previously led a multistate, bipartisan effort urging the president to classify fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction. To learn more, click here.