Feb 8, 2023

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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Demands President Biden Declare Mexican Drug Cartels Terrorist Organizations



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today demanded President Joe Biden and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken designate Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations under federal law. The president's unlawful immigration policies embolden the cartels who are bringing in vast amounts of deadly fentanyl, as well as violence, into the country—putting American lives at risk. Declaring the cartels FTOs gives state and federal agencies the authority to freeze assets, deny entry to cartel members and pursue stricter punishments.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "It's evident that the Mexican drug cartels are terrorist organizations—they are trafficking deadly fentanyl directly across the border, and it is killing tens of thousands of Americans every year. They are also fueling extreme violence at the southwest border and beyond. Sadly, the Biden administration has only emboldened the cartels to commit even more crimes on both sides of the border—through his unlawful immigration policies. So, today, I am demanding that Biden better equip the federal government to fight back by declaring the drug cartels foreign terrorist organizations."

Cartel violence is escalating in both countries. The groups are assassinating rivals, killing Americans at the border and engaging in an armed insurgency against the Mexican government. Last month, a cartel-style execution occurred in California that reportedly involved a Mexican drug cartel.

In a letter sent today, Attorney General Moody and 20 other state attorneys general explain that the Mexican drug cartels are more than just a drug-trafficking operation.

The letter states: “The Mexican drug cartels threaten our national security beyond the sale of these deadly drugs. Over the past decade, Mexican drug cartels have developed well-organized armed forces to protect their reprehensible trade from rivals and from the Mexican government. The existence of such forces just across our southwestern land border, and the Mexican government’s inability to control them, pose a threat to our national security far greater than a typical drug-trafficking enterprise. That threat is made greater still by the known links between the Mexican drug cartels and Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO) like Hezbollah who already intend to do us harm. Our national security requires the federal government to disrupt this collaboration between cartels and terrorist groups.”

To read the entire letter, click here.

Cartels like the Sinaloa cartel and Cartel Jalisco New Generation import and use raw materials from China to produce deadly fentanyl at a low cost, and traffic the newly-created poison across the southwest border and into our communities. Since February 2021, more than 28,000 pounds of fentanyl have been apprehended by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol.

Some of Attorney General Moody’s many actions to combat the Biden administration’s unlawful public-safety immigration policies resulting in chaos along the border include:

- Urging President Biden to classify fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction, and later leading a bipartisan group of attorneys general in the effort;
- Taking the Biden administration to court to force the president to follow U.S. immigration law that includes a deposition from U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz, who revealed Biden’s policies are forcing USBP to release thousands of migrants—likely inadmissible—into the interior;
- Calling for the president to appoint the Director for the Office of the National Drug Control Policy position to a Cabinet-level post;
- Filing a brief in the Supreme Court of the United States arguing that an executive-branch policy allowing foreign criminals to remain in the U.S. violates federal law; and
- Writing a letter to Biden ahead of a meeting with Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador to bring up the seriousness of the fentanyl crisis and demand accountability from Mexico for the drug entering the United States.

Attorney General Moody and the attorneys general of the following states signed the letter: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia and West Virginia.