

<b>Question#:</b>	1
<b>Topic:</b>	Fentanyl Challenges
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** How is fentanyl more of a law enforcement challenge than prescription opioids or heroin?

Is one of the challenges to combatting fentanyl that it has so many analogues - also known as chemical variations?

If so, how does this present a unique challenge to addressing the supply?

**Response:** Fentanyl is a Schedule II synthetic opioid, used medically for severe pain relief and its analgesic effect is 80 times more potent than morphine and 40-50 times stronger than heroin. As little as 2 milligrams of fentanyl can be fatal. Illicitly produced fentanyl is a greater law enforcement challenge than prescription opioids because it can be easily concealed or formulated to mirror other substances, which makes its presence often unknown to the officers who encounter it during the course of their duties. The presence of fentanyl is often only fully detectable using laboratory analysis. Law enforcement officers are less likely to encounter diverted pharmaceutical prescribed fentanyl.

China-sourced illicit fentanyl is primarily used in counterfeit tableting organizations in the United States that aim to supply prescription pill users. Counterfeit tablet suppliers often purchase powdered illicit fentanyl through the anonymity of the internet and can access open internet and darkweb marketplaces for the tools needed for manufacturing. Illicit Fentanyl, pill presses, and binding agents are then shipped into the United States through the mail parcel system and express consignment. The illicit fentanyl obtained directly from China is typically extremely high in purity rates and often unadulterated.

Mexican drug cartels also obtain illicit fentanyl and precursor materials required to manufacture fentanyl-related substances from China and primarily use fentanyl as an adulterant to their heroin products. The cartels have discovered purchasing or manufacturing illicit fentanyl is much more cost effective and efficient than cultivating opium poppies to produce heroin. Because of the potency of fentanyl, only a few micrograms are needed, and it can be diluted and cut with other agents to produce dozens of kilograms of heroin product. The adulterated heroin can sell at the traditional heroin street price or much higher under the advertisement of a stronger euphoric effect. Smuggled adulterated heroin products now have a much lower cost of replacement when discovered and seized by law enforcement. Typically Mexico-supplied fentanyl is under 12 percent pure.

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Chinese exporters continue to replace and modify chemical variations in production circulation to circumvent the U.S. Controlled Substances Act and the regulated chemical list within China. This provides obstacles when working to schedule new variations of fentanyl analogues within the United States and China.

To date, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Laboratories and Scientific Services Directorate has detected 14 fentanyl analogues and has intelligence leads on six more fentanyl analogues. When a particular analogue of fentanyl is not specifically regulated by the Controlled Substances Act, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents and Assistant U.S. Attorneys are tasked with utilizing the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act of 1986. This is a nuanced statute that presents significant challenges in the prosecution of individuals involved in the supply and distribution chain.

<b>Question#:</b>	2
<b>Topic:</b>	Trans-Shipment
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Are the pill presses that are used in fentanyl trafficking being shipped from China?

**Response:** Many of the companies that manufacture pill presses are based in China and act as suppliers for third-party online vendors, such as EBay and Amazon. The United States regulates the importation of pill presses, but does little to verify whether the purchaser has a legitimate need and the actual use of pill presses is unregulated. As these items have both licit and illicit uses, whether they are diverted to illicit enterprises or used for illicit purposes depends on the party purchasing the pill press.

**Question:** Are the pill presses being trans-shipped from China through other countries and then to the U.S.?

**Response:** CBP is not aware of specific transshipment countries. Regardless of origin, all pill presses entering the United States must be registered with the Drug Enforcement Administration Office of Diversion Control under 21 CFR 1310.05(c).

**Question:** Is there a concern about trans-shipment of pill presses through other countries? If so, why?

**Response:** In the United States, pill presses are regulated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In countries such as Canada, no registration is required and the machines can be purchased online for \$3,000 to \$10,000. Canada is currently contemplating legislation, Bill C-37, which would require every pill press to be registered with Health Canada and permit officers at the border to detain unregistered pill presses.

<b>Question#:</b>	3
<b>Topic:</b>	India and UK as Original Sources
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Recent reports have reconfirmed earlier analyses that the main source nations of fentanyl have been China, Mexico, and Canada, the two latter countries often as transshipment points. However, several other "southern" nations have been identified, one of these as the principal supplier to a major American city. CBP has even identified India and the U.K. as sources of several port seizures since FY 2015.

Does DHS regard India and the UK as original sources of fentanyl or as transshipment points?

**Response:** CBP's Office of Intelligence (OI) is not aware of reporting to indicate that India and the UK are original sources of fentanyl or act as transshipment points, nor is it aware of CBP port seizures traced to these countries since Fiscal Year 2015. CBP OI considers Mexico and China as primary source countries for fentanyl flow into the United States. Reporting indicates that relatively larger scale quantities (by weight) of fentanyl primarily enters the United States in privately-owned vehicles from Mexico via the Southwest Border of the United States. In contrast, fentanyl from China and Canada typically enters the United States through express consignment and international mail shipments in relatively smaller quantities (by weight). CBP additionally considers Canada and Mexico as transshipment points for fentanyl, fentanyl analogues and fentanyl precursors bound for the United States from China.

<b>Question#:</b>	4
<b>Topic:</b>	Tracking and Detection Techniques
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** DEA, CBP and other agencies have reported how often the shipments of fentanyl go through multiple carriers and often multiple countries before the products are finally delivered to the U.S. What tracking and/or detection techniques are made available by U.S. Postal Service and major international carriers in order to flag items that are sent to numerous locations in this manner before it arrives?

**Response:** CBP receives advance electronic data on all international Express Consignments shipments and can effectively target these shipments on arrival in the U.S. In the international mail environment, CBP receives limited and inconsistent data, which makes it extremely difficult to target and track these shipments prior to arrival, and in many cases, even after arrival. In addition, CBP is unable to track fentanyl shipments that go through multiple carriers, and different countries before being delivered to the United States. CBP is working with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to address this issue.

CBP can track and target shipments based on the last movement that is destined to the United States. Most tracking techniques utilize the information provided by the international carriers, including historical information. This information consists of date of shipment arrival, the manifested commodity and declared weight, shipper name and address, consignee name and address of destination. CBP has the ability to flag shipments with similar routing, manifested commodity descriptions, shipping addresses or names, and also by the consignee information.

**Question:** Have DEA and CBP thought of ways to improve these techniques?

**Response:** CBP is holding discussions with USPS to address the challenges that currently exist in the targeting and interdiction of international mail shipments. One major challenge is the ability of the USPS to locate the packages upon arrival to the US at the international mail facilities. Another challenge is the quality of the data provided. Information is not always available for the sender, commodity description, or location of arrival, and not covering all packages that arrive.

CBP and DEA have taken a whole of government approach to bring together, contextualize, and synchronize the strategies and partnerships currently taking place at the federal, state, and local levels to identify and reduce illicit fentanyl. Information shared among the partners allows CBP to identify the packages in international mail when the data is available and collaborate directly with the partner to take further action.

<b>Question#:</b>	5
<b>Topic:</b>	Domestic Shipper
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** The U.S. Postal Inspection Service reported to committee staff in February that three of their five fentanyl-related closed cases involved a "domestic shipper" as the source. Are you familiar at all with these cases?

Did these cases involve the same shipper each time?

What can you tell us about the domestic shippers in these cases?

**Response:** ICE would require additional information relating to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service cases referenced to in order to provide a response.

Generally speaking, however, with respect to ICE investigations, domestic distributors often source fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances from illicit drug market places via the darkweb or Internet, and primarily sell fentanyl in counterfeit opioid tablets. Unlike fentanyl sourced from Mexico, domestic distributors often have no cartel affiliations.

<b>Question#:</b>	6
<b>Topic:</b>	Manifest Data
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Is Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI") using manifest data from the consignment carriers such as Federal Express to develop any leads or patterns about Chinese sources of fentanyl-related shipments?

Freight forwarding of drug shipments may involve bundling or consolidating several kinds of items into one shipment. Is HSI using manifest data from consignment carriers about patterns of freight forwarding?

Would certain patterns of freight forwarding raise a red flag for HSI?

**Response:** ICE exploits all types of shipping data, including consignment carriers and freight forwarders, to identify trends and target illicit fentanyl shipments.

ICE and CBP analyze advance information to gather, fuse, and assess data from the global supply chain to develop a risk profile and evaluate that risk at the earliest point.

<b>Question#:</b>	7
<b>Topic:</b>	Cooperation with Consignment Carriers
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Has HSI developed a level of cooperation with consignment carriers so that subpoenas or other investigative tools can be expedited to investigate fentanyl-related cases?

What can you tell us about recent and/or significant seizures of illicit opioids and/or related items, e.g. pill presses or component parts, in terms of source countries or entry points into the USA?

Since so much of the source for fentanyl is attributed to China, and many air express or other modes of shipment are relatively small, what has been learned about return or source addresses when illicit drugs have been identified?

**Response:** ICE has established strong partnerships with consignment carriers such as Federal Express (FedEx), United Parcel Service (UPS), and DHL, primarily in the ICE offices closest geographically to the companies' headquarters or international consignment hubs. For example, ICE HSI Memphis has forged a mutually beneficial working relationship with FedEx World Headquarters that helps to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations utilizing FedEx services to illegally ship fentanyl, fentanyl-related substances, pill presses, and pill press parts both domestically and internationally. These efforts have allowed ICE and CBP to analyze shipping trends in an effort to better identify and target suspicious shipments. Similarly, relationships have also been forged by ICE HSI Louisville with UPS and by ICE HSI Cincinnati with DHL. This partnership strategy has proven fruitful in the expediting and return of subpoena requests relating to fentanyl investigations.

Recently, DHL supported a request initiated by ICE that resulted in the seizure of 25 kilograms of suspected fentanyl found in several DHL parcel shipments. The parcels originated in China, and were destined for the northeast region of the United States. DHL continues to provide substantial information, which is aiding in the identification of members of a regional or "domestic" fentanyl-supplying organization. ICE currently has multiple ongoing investigations that have resulted in the seizures of pill presses, counterfeit pill press dies, and compound mixers. On a regular basis, pill presses and their component parts destined to locations throughout the nation are seized at the aforementioned express consignment hubs. These seizures are used to generate lead packets that are distributed to the affected ICE offices. As a result of the intelligence received from these seizures, illicit fentanyl tableting operations are often identified.



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In each of these cases, it has been determined that the fentanyl, fentanyl-related substances, and/or pill press items have originated in main land China. Many of the Chinese addresses are those associated with freight forwarding services and not of the manufacturing/supplying organization. Additionally, investigations have revealed that supply organizations utilize freight forwarders that typically have multiple freight consolidators. This provides several layers of anonymity in the shipment process and thwarts law enforcement efforts in identifying the true source address.

<b>Question#:</b>	8
<b>Topic:</b>	Cellulose
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** It has been noted that there are substantial quantities of cellulose that usually or frequently accompany shipments of fentanyl powder for the process of making it into pills. Is law enforcement finding quantities of cellulose in drug distribution cases involving fentanyl?

Should cellulose be tracked?

**Response:** Microcrystalline cellulose (MC), as well as several other excipients (copovidone, magnesium stearate, etc.) are frequently used in illicit fentanyl and fentanyl-related substance tableting operations. These excipients are almost always found when a tableting operation is discovered. ICE special agents and (CBP) Officers often utilize information contained in manifested shipments of the items to develop actionable leads for dissemination to ICE special agents in the field. Most international distributors of MC accurately manifest their products as MC, which is completely unregulated.

Currently, CBP and ICE are successfully tracking MC and have found it to be beneficial to targeting, interdiction, and enforcement actions.

<b>Question#:</b>	9
<b>Topic:</b>	Testing Strips
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Last fall, the Canadian press reported that a type of test strip to indicate the presence of fentanyl was being made widely available for a low price (\$5 Canadian). These kits or test strips were first announced in Vancouver, British Columbia, but later reports have identified them to pharmacies in Winnipeg, Manitoba (the middle of Canada). Yet there appears to be little if any public reaction, response, or similar kits detected or reported in the US. Why is that?

**Response:** Within a week of the reports of the market availability of these test strips, sales were stopped over concerns with accuracy and effectiveness of using urine test strips on bulk drug samples. As of this time, we are not aware of any reliable field test kits for the detection of bulk opioids that is currently on the market. ICE is currently working with our U.S. law enforcement counterparts to identify the safest handling methods and best field testing procedures for fentanyl.

<b>Question#:</b>	10
<b>Topic:</b>	Carfentanil
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Given that carfentanil can be lethal to the touch, or even to breathe, what kinds of special precautions are being provided to law enforcement and emergency responders to guard against accidental toxic contact?

Given the extreme deadliness of carfentanil, and its documented use as a chemical weapon, at what point would trafficking in carfentanil be considered a national security issue?

**Response:** Carfentanil is treated by law enforcement officers in the same respect as other fentanyl-related substances. Proper personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, is issued to the field to be utilized when suspected carfentanil is encountered. In an effort to standardize protective procedures, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recently published standard guidance to prevent occupational exposure to fentanyl for emergency responders. ICE special agents are also being trained in the administration and use of naloxone, which is used to treat overdose symptoms. Law enforcement hazardous material response teams are used for search warrant executions of locations suspected of containing fentanyl-related substances.

ICE remains committed to interdicting, identifying, disrupting, and dismantling organizations that provide fentanyl and related substances such as carfentanil to the United States.

<b>Question#:</b>	11
<b>Topic:</b>	Dark Web Sources
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Many, if not most online orders for fentanyl and its analogues are alleged to be accessed through the dark web, whether it may be "Tor," Silk Road, or other sources. To what extent can patterns and tendencies, such as shipments and receipts, be traced and detected that can assist law enforcement in limiting or shutting down various sites?

**Response:** Packages of fentanyl and its analogues purchased through the dark web are often small quantities and packaged in a manner that does not alert law enforcement. However, when packages are identified and seized, it is sometimes possible to identify unique characteristics associated with a particular dark web vendor's packaging or shipping methodology. Since these unique characteristics are frequently replicated across multiple packages from the same vendor, it is sometimes possible to document packaging similarities and link associated packages. These similarities can include labeling, packaging, point of origin or ship from location, or deceptive items included within a package. While some of these packaging trends only help law enforcement attribute shipments to a particular vendor who remains unknown, consistent points of origin or shipping locations sometimes contribute to identification of the vendor. Likewise, the same destination address for multiple packages may help to establish a pattern that can assist law enforcement in identifying the purchasers.

Although identifying these patterns and tendencies in packages of fentanyl and its analogues sometimes contributes to the identification and location of dark web vendors and buyers, this normally only has a slight limiting effect on darknet marketplaces. Since these marketplaces have numerous vendors, when one vendor is identified and arrested, another source of supply is readily available on the marketplace. Additionally, because these marketplaces operate with the anonymity and security afforded through encryption software such as Tor or other platforms, identifying the physical location of servers and shutting down the sites is normally very challenging.

**Question:** How is the dark web more of a law enforcement challenge than rogue Internet pharmacies on the open web?

**Response:** There are various components of the dark web and related functionality that make it significantly more challenging for law enforcement than rogue Internet pharmacies on the open web, including security and anonymity, cryptocurrencies, and the user community.

### 1) Security and anonymity:

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It is normally possible to identify the location of sites hosted on the open web, such as rogue Internet pharmacies, through a variety of law enforcement techniques. However, Tor has implemented security and encryption, ensuring Tor hidden service sites are not readily identifiable, even when sophisticated law enforcement techniques are applied.

Tor and other platforms that provide the ability to host dark websites and connect to the dark web were designed and built with security and anonymity as primary goals. To provide security, all traffic that is routed within the Tor network is encrypted. To provide anonymity, Tor is configured so users never directly connect to the servers hosting the Tor hidden service sites, and the servers hosting the sites never connect directly to the user who is attempting to make a connection. As a result, no identifying Internet protocol address or other information is transmitted when connections are made to a site.

Additionally, because dark websites are normally hosted through companies or individuals that are not compliant with law enforcement, even when the location of a dark website is identified, serving a warrant or court order often presents another set of challenges. Lastly, because encryption is employed for all transmitted data, even when a server location is identified, a Title III intercept is not a viable solution because transmitted data is unreadable.

## **2) Cryptocurrencies or privacy-focused cryptocurrencies:**

Darknet marketplaces require purchasers and vendors to use convertible virtual currencies, primarily bitcoin, or the new generation of privacy-enhancing cryptocurrencies when conducting transactions. Although network analytic investigative tools can assist with identifying and analyzing related transactions on a Bitcoin-type blockchain, attributing transactions to a specific user and identifying a real person or entity as a user is more challenging than with traditional payment methods. Moreover, the new generation of privacy-enhancing cryptocurrencies presents significant challenges to the use of existing network analytic tools. While the United States regulates convertible virtual currency exchangers, hosted wallets, and (for centralized virtual currencies) administrators as money transmitters, with anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) obligations under the Bank Secrecy Act, including AML program, transaction monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements, the general lack of regulation of virtual currency globally exacerbates its risks and presents obstacles to international law enforcement cooperation.

## **3) User community:**

An active user community facilitates the use of both the dark web and virtual currencies for illicit activities. Fora on both the open web and the dark web provide information

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related to dark web activities, including how to download Tor and access the dark web, how to employ encryption, and how to remain anonymous online. Other discussions in these fora include latest trends in drugs, reviews of drugs purchased on the dark web, and information about other items sold through the dark web. Additionally, many users in these fora seek to educate other users by highlighting suspected law enforcement activity on the dark web, encounters with law enforcement related to dark web purchases, and any other information related to notable law enforcement investigations.

<b>Question#:</b>	12
<b>Topic:</b>	Fentanyl from Russian-Speaking Countries
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Some of the committee staff efforts to track down internet suppliers of fentanyl have resulted in connections to Russian language websites, not necessarily China as first assumed. It is also known that the Baltic countries (especially Estonia) have been struggling with outbreaks of illicit fentanyl for years. Have there been any fentanyl seizures in the U.S. that have come from Russian-speaking countries?

**Response:** ICE is aware of one case being conducted by ICE HSI Boston where an empty parcel from Zaporozhye, Ukraine, was discovered during a search warrant executed at the home of an individual under investigation for selling controlled substances.

It is unknown whether this parcel contained fentanyl or a fentanyl-related substance (FRS). Aside from this case, the National Targeting Center, as the clearinghouse within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for tracking this type of data, is not aware of any fentanyl or FRS seizures occurring at an international mail facility where the product was from a Russian-speaking nation.



<b>Question#:</b>	13
<b>Topic:</b>	Payment Processes
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** There is the old adage 'follow the money' when efforts are made to detect illegal drug suppliers. Bitcoins have been cited as a particular favorite mode of payment for many fentanyl shipments. What efforts have or are currently being made to track these payment processes?

Have new or changing alternatives been detected?

Is ICE seeing any evidence that credit card companies, consignment carriers, or domain registrars are accepting bitcoin as payment?

**Response:** ICE maintains a proactive approach to virtual currency and recognizes virtual currency may become more mainstream if the technology is embraced globally. Many illicit fentanyl sources operate on the dark web and use bitcoin for financing. ICE's Illicit Finance and Proceeds of Crime Unit conducts outreach to major virtual currency exchangers operating within the United States in order to clarify and emphasize the need for collaborative partnerships. Partnerships between ICE and financial-sector businesses enhance ICE's operational abilities to investigate digital currencies. ICE collaborates with industry leaders to identify and acquire access to the most effective forensic tools available to analyze and identify information through the Bitcoin blockchain, which is a traceable ledger of every Bitcoin transaction ever conducted. Blockchain analytics technology enables investigators to track payments back from the darknet marketplaces, with the goal of identifying the user connected to a specific bitcoin wallet address.

In an effort to enhance user privacy, newer cryptocurrencies use technology that obstructs efforts to trace transactions through a distributed ledger, and present heightened challenges to regulatory and compliance efforts. Privacy-enhancing cryptocurrencies present new challenges for law enforcement to identify the source of transactions utilizing these types of virtual currencies.

ICE is aware that some domain registrars accept bitcoin payment. Although ICE has not experienced major credit card companies accepting bitcoin, it is aware that certain pre-paid credit cards do accept bitcoin.

<b>Question#:</b>	14
<b>Topic:</b>	UPS and FedEx Cooperation
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Tim Murphy
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Some of the illicit fentanyl, and its precursors, is being detected as being sent through American commercial carriers, such as UPS and FedEx. What kind of cooperation have you received from these carriers?

Can they improve their monitoring and cooperation? If so, how?

**Response:** ICE and CBP work closely with express consignment companies to target contraband, including fentanyl, its precursors, and fentanyl analogues. Both ICE and CBP have an excellent working relationship with the express consignment companies. Efforts continue to foster a continuous improvement environment for monitoring.

<b>Question#:</b>	15
<b>Topic:</b>	Monitoring the Foreign Supply
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Ryan Costello
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** As we work towards the implementation of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), how are we also monitoring the foreign supply networks of deadly chemicals fueling the opioid and heroin epidemic, such as those being produced in China?

**Response:** ICE and CBP work with other U.S. agencies and foreign partners to identify foreign supply networks and seize illicit fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances before they arrive in the United States.

ICE and CBP are exploiting shipment data to better target shipments of suspected deadly chemicals, including working with its Attaché offices in China, Canada, and Mexico to pursue informational leads obtained through seizure analysis and investigative methods. Trends in chemical structure or concealment methods are shared internationally to identify fentanyl organizations, and new manufacturing methods and chemical compounds.

In April 2017, ICE and CBP personnel assigned in Hong Kong, China, worked with Hong Kong Customs and Excise (HKCE) to target parcels suspected of containing fentanyl and other illicit substances that were transshipped from mainland China to Hong Kong and destined for the United States. Based on information provided by ICE and CBP, HKCE was able to seize packages destined to the United States and several other countries that contained fentanyl or other illicit substances.

<b>Question#:</b>	16
<b>Topic:</b>	Mexican Poppy Crops
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Ryan Costello
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** You noted in your testimony the influence of poppy cultivation in Mexico, of which the DEA has reported a 50 percent increase. As you know, increased cultivation therefore means increased production and trafficking. What more needs to be done to encourage Mexico's cooperation and willingness to destroy poppy crops? What are the obstacles here?

How are American authorities working with Mexican authorities to counter this threat?

**Response:** ICE, DEA, and the State Department are working proactively with the Government of Mexico (GoM) to identify and destroy poppy fields identified through investigative means. Mexico's vast geographical terrain and extreme cartel violence provide some obstacles for law enforcement. ICE, DEA, the State Department and the GoM continue to share intelligence and investigate transnational criminal organizations to stop and eradicate poppy crops and prevent other controlled substances from being produced and smuggled into the United States.

<b>Question#:</b>	17
<b>Topic:</b>	Security Loophole
<b>Hearing:</b>	Fentanyl: The Next Wave of the Opioid Crisis
<b>Primary:</b>	The Honorable Ryan Costello
<b>Committee:</b>	ENERGY & COMMERCE (HOUSE)

**Question:** Currently, over 340 million packages come into the United States through the global postal system, via the United States Postal Service, without advanced electronic manifest data. Do you agree that this is a major security loophole, and a problem that needs to be fixed?

**Response:** USPS provides CBP all of the advanced electronic data they received for the foreign post operation. The advanced electronic data provided to CBP and all end-users in the system is used to target shipments as appropriate. While CBP would agree that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by USPS, CBP continues to inspect, via x-ray technology, radiation detection, K-9 inspection, and physical examination, all mail that is presented to CBP. CBP currently receives advance electronic data from several countries via the USPS and we are actively targeting shipments.

**Question:** Would having this data better enable CBP and other agencies to detect and interdict dangerous and deadly drugs?

**Response:** Obtaining additional data from USPS is very important to CBP.

CBP has limited visibility in the international mail environment, which consists of Letter Class mail, Parcel Mail and E-Packets that originate in China. CBP receives no advanced data on letter class mail and receives limited, inconsistent data for parcels from the following countries: China, Hong Kong, Germany, Canada, Spain, France, Australia, South Korea, Singapore and the United Kingdom. Interdicting and targeting specific shipments creates a challenge, as mail processing at the International Mail Facilities (IMFs) is a manual process, which relies upon an officer's visual and physical inspection of parcels. The USPS is often unable to locate targeted packages because there is no mechanism at the IMFs to ensure the presentation of all targeted shipments.

Ideally, USPS modernization would support leveraging the increasing availability of AED by allowing items identified using a tracking number, such as the one that UPU regulations will soon require to be applied to all small packets containing goods, to be pulled for inspection when they are scanned into the computer system as having arrived at their particular air hubs.

**Question:** Do you believe foreign posts, like China Post, should be compelled to provide advanced electronic manifest data to the USPS, so the USPS can provide that data to CBP?

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**Response:** Through the USPS, CBP has been able to receive advance electronic data from a number of countries on a voluntary basis. China Post is one of the foreign postal operators that voluntarily provides approximately 99 percent of its e-packet data to USPS for review by CBP. Compelling a foreign post to provide electronic data is an approach that may or may not be feasible. CBP believes that we need to work with USPS to develop more bi-lateral agreements with foreign post operators to receive data.