

## **Opening Remarks**

Good morning, my name is Richard Hudson, and I represent North Carolina's 9<sup>th</sup> district.

Thank you to Chairman Guthrie and Ranking Member Eshoo for hosting this important hearing and thank you to the witnesses for their time and expert testimony this morning.

The threat of fentanyl plaguing our nation is very real and unfortunately has become the leading cause of death among adults ages 18-45.

Last year, it claimed the lives of more than 4,200 North Carolinians... many of whom were young folks who had no idea what they were using was laced with fentanyl.

This includes people like Matthew Thomas from Sanford who lost his life after an accidental exposure to fentanyl in 2020.

I am inspired by Matthew's mom, Wendy, who has turned her loss into advocacy to warn parents and students about the danger of fentanyl poisoning. Her mission should be one that no parent should experience ever again.

President Biden's open border policies are fueling the fentanyl crisis while they show no interest in changing these policies to solve the problem.

The DEA even shared in an unclassified intelligence report that the flow of fentanyl will continue to diversify with China,

Mexico and now India contributing to the supply of fentanyl to the U.S.

Today we have an opportunity to make the realities of the fentanyl crisis known and propose one solution.

Enacting the HALT Fentanyl Act to permanently classify fentanyl related substances as a schedule one drug under the Controlled Substances Act is one small step in curbing this crisis.