

**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations**  
**Oversight Hearing**  
**1334 Longworth House Office Building**  
**July 22, 2025**  
**2:30 PM**

**Oversight Hearing titled** *“Examining the Trump Administration’s Work Combatting Transnational Cartels in Indian Country.”*

**Questions from Rep. Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.** for Stacy Zinn (ret.), Drug Enforcement Administration

1. With limited federal resources, how could Tribal sovereignty be enhanced so the Tribes can investigate, apprehend, charge, and prosecute cartel activity?

A study of other successful tribes that have their own tribal police should be conducted nationwide. Determine if a tribe is financially well off also has a successful tribal police force. If this is the case then obviously money is a key factor. Next, tribal police candidates need extensive training such as FLETC training. While state training is good, FLETC training gives the tribal police comparable BIA training. Last, it should be noted that Crow Reservation had an opportunity to run their own tribal police force around the time frame of 2021. Money was an issue but they could have prevailed. In the long run, it is important that the tribe is unified in having their own tribal police force before building a unit otherwise, the process will fail like it did on Crow.

2. You testify about working with federal partners to seize fentanyl, cocaine, and firearms from a trafficking ring spanning from Seattle to Georgia. Please elaborate more on this operation. Has the federal government effectively curtailed this interstate trafficking ring? How can we ensure interstate crime identified by Tribes if effectively combatted by the federal government?

I testified that the drug trafficking organization (DTO) was based out of Washington and impacting Crow, Rocky Boy, Flathead, Ft. Belknap, Northern Cheyenne Reservations to include Billings, MT. Yes, the DTO that was distributing meth and a little fentanyl to Montana was dismantled. Billings

DEA, along with their BIA TFO, Billings FBI and counter narcotics National Guard intelligence analyst, worked the long-term investigation (if I left out any other law enforcement it was by mistake). Federal resources were utilized in order to identify the DTO that was originally based in Washington. DEA Billings coordinated with DEA Spokane, BIA and other local units. A combined effort was able to dismantle the DTO in both WA and MT. However, if the demand for the drugs still exists, there will be a backfill in the void that was created by the successful convictions of the DTO members.

Building good relationships/partnerships with tribal members fosters a good working environment. Most federal agencies in Montana are headed by Resident Agents in Charge (RACs). I found that building relationships with tribal members leads to better communications which leads to knowing their needs sooner than later. Therefore, direct communications between a point of contact with DEA, FBI, BIA and/or the U.S. Attorney's Office allows for a robust communication pipeline between the reservations and federal law enforcement.

3. From your experiences, have you seen an increase in drug trafficking from the Northern border?

Currently, it is not being reported that drugs shipments are coming from Canada into Montana. There are whispers that there are some drugs being transported between the two border reservations but this has not been proven. It may be strictly user amounts being body carried but again, this has not been proven. I will say that if I was overseeing a team, I would watch CJNC's movement between Mexico and Canada to determine if a new pipeline is being established.