



# Department of Justice

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**STATEMENT OF THE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**ANNE MILGRAM  
ADMINISTRATOR  
DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION**

**BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**FOR A HEARING ENTITLED  
FISCAL YEAR 2025 REQUEST FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT  
ADMINISTRATION**

**PRESENTED**

**MAY 7, 2024**

**Statement of Anne Milgram  
Administrator  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
U.S. Department of Justice**

**At a Hearing Entitled,  
Fiscal Year 2025 Request for the Drug Enforcement Administration**

**Before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science  
United States House of Representatives**

**May 7, 2024**

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Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Cartwright, and distinguished members of the subcommittee: On behalf of the Department of Justice (Department), and in particular the nearly 10,000 employees working at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), thank you for inviting me to testify on the DEA's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget request and the mission it is designed to support.

First, I would like to express our appreciation for the support that this subcommittee has shown for DEA with the \$3.884 million increase in Fiscal Year 2024. It is this support that will enable us to continue the critical work of defeating the cartels, combating the illicit fentanyl epidemic, and saving American lives.

Americans today are experiencing the most devastating drug crisis in our nation's history. This is because one drug—fentanyl—has transformed the criminal landscape. Illicit fentanyl is exceptionally cheap to make, exceptionally easy to disguise, and exceptionally deadly to those who take it. It is the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 to 45, and it kills Americans from all walks of life, in every state and community in this country. The criminal organizations responsible for bringing illicit fentanyl into this country are modern, sophisticated, and extremely violent enterprises that rely on a global supply chain to manufacture, transport, and sell illicit fentanyl, and rely on a global illicit financial network to pocket the billions of dollars in revenue from those sales.

DEA has been hard at work to undertake a transformation of its own to meet this moment. DEA has acted with urgency to set a new vision, target the global criminal networks most responsible for the influx of illicit fentanyl into the United States, and raise public awareness about how just one pill can kill. We have transformed our vision by focusing on illicit fentanyl – the drug killing the most Americans - and the criminal organizations responsible for flooding illicit fentanyl into our communities—the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco New Generation (Jalisco) Cartel. We have transformed our plan by building an entirely new strategic layer—our counterthreat teams for the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Cartel and their illicit finance networks—that map the cartels, analyze their networks, and develop targeting information on the members of those networks wherever they operate around the globe. We have transformed our execution by providing that targeting information to our 333 offices worldwide, drawing from our global intelligence and law enforcement teams here and abroad, and working as One DEA to take the networks down.

Our efforts are yielding results. In the last year alone, our investigations have led to the indictment of 28 members and associates of the Chapitos network of the Sinaloa Cartel and the extradition of Ovidio Guzman Lopez; the arrest of 3,337 associates of the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels in the United States responsible for the last mile of illicit fentanyl and methamphetamine distribution on our streets and through social media; charges against 12 companies and 24 individuals in the People’s Republic of China – four of which were members of the Chapitos network – for providing customers in the United States and Mexico with the precursor chemicals and scientific know-how necessary to make illicit fentanyl and other dangerous drugs; and a case that started with a young woman in Washington, DC—Diamond Lynch, who took one pill and died—and led to the take down of a vast drug distribution conspiracy across the U.S. that is responsible for bringing hundreds of thousands of fake pills laced with illicit fentanyl from Mexico to California to D.C.

This written testimony will describe DEA’s accomplishments and requests for FY 2025.

### ***The Drug Poisoning Epidemic***

In 2022, nearly 108,000 people in the United States lost their lives to drug poisonings. Countless more people are poisoned and survive. These drug poisonings are a national crisis.

A majority of the drug poisoning deaths in the United States involve synthetic opioids, such as illicit fentanyl, that are being distributed in new forms. Illicit fentanyl is being hidden in and being mixed with other illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. Drug traffickers are also flooding our communities with illicit fentanyl disguised in the form of fake prescription pills. These fake pills often are made to appear legitimate using pill presses and marketed by drug traffickers to deceive Americans into thinking that they are real, diverted prescription medications. In reality, these fake pills are not made by pharmaceutical companies, but by drug trafficking organizations, and they are highly addictive and potentially deadly. DEA lab testing reveals that today 7 out of 10 of these fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills contain a potentially lethal dose.

The availability of illicit fentanyl throughout the United States has reached unprecedented heights. DEA seized more than 79 million fake pills containing illicit fentanyl in 2023 and nearly 12,000 pounds of illicit fentanyl powder. Together, that is more than 380 million potentially deadly doses of illicit fentanyl seized in 2023.

### ***The Drug Enforcement Administration***

#### ***Mission***

As the single mission agency tasked with enforcing our nation’s drug laws, DEA’s top operational priority is to relentlessly pursue and defeat the two Mexican drug cartels—the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Cartel—that are primarily responsible for driving the current illicit fentanyl and drug poisoning epidemic in the United States.

DEA is the lead agency on the law enforcement elements in the Administration’s whole-of-government response to defeat the cartels and combat the drug poisoning epidemic in our communities. DEA’s role in leading the law enforcement response to the illicit fentanyl epidemic protects the safety of agents, officers, and sources. Importantly, a unified response to the illicit

fentanyl epidemic ensures that the whole of government is moving in one direction that protects the safety and health of Americans.

DEA operates 30 field divisions with 241 domestic offices, 92 foreign offices in 69 countries, and nine forensic labs. DEA's robust domestic and international presence allows it to map and target the entire Sinaloa Cartel and Jalisco Cartel networks.

### Counterthreat Teams

DEA has launched cross-agency counterthreat teams (CTT) to execute a network-focused operational strategy to defeat the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels and their illicit finance networks. The CTT network-focused strategy has revealed the cartels' extensive efforts to expand their criminal operations and influence within the United States and globally. To enhance DEA's network-targeting strategy, DEA created several domestic and foreign divisional CTTs, that include Europe, Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador. Composed of special agents, intelligence analysts, targeters, program analysts, data scientists, and digital specialists, these cross-functional teams work to analyze, identify, map, and target Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartel cells. These teams enable DEA to maintain an operating picture of the cartels and to quickly identify and adapt to the ever-evolving threats and trends presented by the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels.

Building on the work targeting the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels, DEA created a third counterthreat team focused on illicit finance networks (CTTIF). This counterthreat team improves DEA's visibility of the cartels' illicit financial infrastructure. CTTIF provides direct assistance to DEA field groups already investigating drug money launderers working for, or on behalf of the cartels, and to identify new money laundering targets. CTTIF is providing significant resources and coordinating current investigations on high level money launderers for the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels.

### Operation Overdrive

DEA is simultaneously focused on American communities. We are targeting the drug trafficking organizations and violent gangs located in the United States that are responsible for the greatest number of drug-related deaths and violence. DEA's Operation Overdrive uses a data-driven, intelligence-led approach to identify and dismantle criminal drug networks operating in areas with the highest rates of violence and drug poisoning deaths. In each of these locations, DEA is working with local and state law enforcement officials to conduct threat assessments identifying the criminal networks and individuals that are causing the most harm. DEA works with state, local, tribal and Federal law enforcement and prosecutorial partners to pursue investigations and prosecutions that will reduce drug related violence and drug poisonings. Phase One of Operation Overdrive took place in 34 locations across the United States, and Phase Two took place in 57 locations. Phase Three has recently been completed in 32 locations. . So far in Operation Overdrive, DEA and its partners have made over 2,800 arrests, seized over 1,800 firearms, and seized over 13 million potentially deadly doses of illicit fentanyl and 1 million doses of methamphetamine.

### "One Pill Can Kill"

In 2021, DEA launched the "One Pill Can Kill" enforcement effort and public awareness campaign. Through that, DEA and our law enforcement partners have seized millions of fake illicit fentanyl-

laced prescription pills and hundreds of pounds of illicit fentanyl powder—equating to millions of potentially lethal doses of illicit fentanyl, which could have entered our communities.

### *Social Media*

DEA is combatting the sale of illicit fentanyl on social media. Drug traffickers are using social media platforms to recruit associates, find customers, and sell illicit fentanyl and other deadly drugs. In particular, drug traffickers use social media to deceptively advertise fake prescription pills—pills that look like oxycodone, Xanax, or Adderall but actually contain illicit fentanyl—directly to young people and teenagers. DEA has investigated hundreds of cases directly linked to the sale of fake pills containing illicit fentanyl on social media, including on Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

### *Families and Law Enforcement Partners*

DEA also works closely with families who have lost loved ones to drug poisonings. These families are often brave advocates for change and help ensure that people in their communities are aware of the dangers of illicit fentanyl and fake pills.

DEA is working closely with our local, state, tribal, territorial, Federal, and international counterparts to target every part of the illegal drug supply chain and every level of the drug trafficking organizations that threaten the health and safety of our communities. To succeed, we must use every tool to combat this substantial threat that is being driven by the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels, as well as the Chinese-sourced precursor chemicals and global money laundering operations that facilitate the cartels' operations.

### *Mexican Cartels and Drug Trafficking*

The Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels are ruthless, violent, criminal organizations that have associates, facilitators, and brokers in all 50 states and around the world.

The Sinaloa Cartel, the Jalisco Cartel, and their affiliates control the vast majority of the illicit fentanyl global supply chain, from manufacture to distribution. The cartels are buying precursor chemicals in the PRC; transporting the precursor chemicals from the PRC to Mexico; using the precursor chemicals to mass produce illicit fentanyl; using pill presses to process the illicit fentanyl into fake prescription pills; and using cars, trucks, and other routes to transport the drugs from Mexico into the United States for distribution. It costs the cartels as little as 10 cents to produce an illicit fentanyl-laced fake prescription pill that is sold in the United States for as much as \$5 to \$25 per pill. As a result, the cartels make billions of dollars from trafficking illicit fentanyl into the United States.

The business model used by the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels is to grow at all costs, no matter how many people die in the process. The cartels are engaging in deliberate, calculated treachery to deceive Americans and drive addiction to achieve higher profits.

### *The Sinaloa Cartel*

The Sinaloa Cartel, based in the Mexican State of Sinaloa, is one of the oldest drug trafficking organizations in Mexico. The Sinaloa Cartel controls drug trafficking activity in various regions in Mexico, particularly along the Pacific Coast. Additionally, it maintains the most expansive

international footprint of the Mexican cartels. The Sinaloa Cartel exports and distributes wholesale amounts of illicit fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine in the United States by maintaining distribution hubs in cities that include Phoenix, Los Angeles, Denver, and Chicago. Illicit drugs distributed by the Sinaloa Cartel are primarily smuggled into the United States through crossing points located along Mexico's border with California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. The Sinaloa Cartel reportedly has a presence in 19 of the 32 Mexican states.

### *The Jalisco Cartel*

The Jalisco Cartel is based in the city of Guadalajara in the Mexican state of Jalisco, and was originally formed as a spin off from the Milenio Cartel, a subordinate to the Sinaloa Cartel. The Jalisco Cartel maintains illicit drug distribution hubs in Los Angeles, Seattle, Charlotte, Chicago, and Atlanta. Internationally, the Jalisco Cartel has a presence and influence through associates, facilitators, and brokers in countries around the world. The Jalisco Cartel smuggles illicit drugs such as fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine into the United States by accessing various trafficking corridors along the southwest border that include Tijuana, Mexicali, Ciudad Juarez, Matamoros, and Nuevo Laredo. The Jalisco Cartel's rapid expansion of its drug trafficking activities is characterized by the organization's willingness to engage in violent confrontations with Mexican Government security forces and rival cartels. The Jalisco Cartel reportedly has a presence in 21 of the 32 Mexican states.

### *People's Republic of China and Precursor Chemicals*

Chemical companies within the PRC produce and sell the majority of precursor chemicals that are used today by the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels to manufacture illicit fentanyl. These precursor chemicals from companies within the PRC are the building blocks for the illicit fentanyl that is manufactured and transported from Mexico into the United States, and that are causing tens of thousands of drug-related deaths in our country.

### *Chinese Money Laundering Operations and the Cartels*

The Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels increasingly utilize Chinese Money Laundering Organizations (CMLOs) in the United States and around the world to facilitate laundering drug proceeds. CMLOs use mirror transfers, trade-based money laundering, and bulk cash movement to facilitate the exchange of foreign currency. The use of CMLOs has made the money laundering process less expensive and drug trafficking more profitable – for the cartels.

These money laundering schemes are designed to remedy two separate issues: (1) the desire of Mexican cartels to repatriate drug proceeds from the United States into Mexico and (2) the desire of wealthy Chinese nationals to move restricted funds from China into the United States. CMLOs aid both groups by providing U.S. dollars held by Mexican cartels in the U.S. to PRC-based customers who need funds in the U.S.

### *Enforcement Actions Against the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels and PRC-Based Chemical Suppliers*

#### *The Chapitos Network of the Sinaloa Cartel:*

As part of this network approach, DEA investigations resulted in charges against 28 members and associates of the Chapitos network of the Sinaloa Cartel. These include suppliers of illicit fentanyl precursor chemicals based in the PRC, a broker based in Guatemala assisting with the transport of those chemicals from the PRC to Mexico, managers of clandestine illicit fentanyl laboratories based in Mexico converting the precursor chemicals into illicit fentanyl pills and powder, weapons traffickers and assassins perpetuating extreme violence in Mexico to protect and expand the illicit fentanyl production operation, smugglers transporting the illicit fentanyl from Mexico into the United States, and illicit financiers laundering the proceeds of illicit fentanyl sales from the United States back to Mexico through bulk cash smuggling, trade-based money laundering, and cryptocurrency.

As part of the investigation, the DEA conducted operations in ten countries and seized staggering amounts of illicit materials, including 2,557,000 fentanyl-laced pills, 105 kilograms of fentanyl powder, and 37 kilograms of fentanyl precursor chemicals, amounting to 22,747,441 potentially lethal doses of illicit fentanyl. Eight defendants have been arrested to date with the assistance of DEA's law enforcement partners in the United States and abroad. Ovidio Guzman-Lopez was arrested by military officials in Mexico and was extradited to the United States on September 15, 2023.

#### *Operation Last Mile*

On May 5, 2023, DEA announced the results of Operation Last Mile, a year-long national operation targeting operatives, associates, and distributors affiliated with the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels who were located in the United States and responsible for the last mile of illicit fentanyl and methamphetamine distribution on our streets and on social media.

In Operation Last Mile, DEA tracked down distribution networks across the United States that are connected to the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels. The Operation shows that the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels use violent local street gangs and criminal groups and individuals across the United States to flood American communities with huge amounts of illicit fentanyl and methamphetamine, driving addiction and violence, and killing Americans. It also shows that the Cartels, their members, and their associates use social media applications—like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat—and encrypted platforms—like WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Wire, and Wickr—to coordinate logistics and reach out to victims.

#### *Operation Killer Chemicals*

On June 23, 2023, indictments were announced against four chemical companies and eight individuals—all based in the PRC—for knowingly providing customers in the United States and Mexico with the precursor chemicals and scientific know-how to manufacture illicit fentanyl. These indictments were the first-ever charges against fentanyl precursor chemical companies. Two PRC nationals were taken into custody pursuant to the investigation and the other six individuals and four companies remain fugitives. DEA also seized more than 200 kilograms of precursors in these investigations alone, enough to make millions of potentially deadly doses of illicit fentanyl.

As alleged, these Chinese chemical companies, and the individuals working for them, not only provided customers with the ingredients for fentanyl, they also gave advice on how to mix and substitute ingredients to more efficiently make illicit fentanyl, and employed chemists to troubleshoot and provide expert advice when customers had questions.

The companies allegedly went to great lengths to conceal the chemicals during transport. They are alleged to have falsified shipping labels and customs paperwork, and even disguised the chemicals at a molecular level—adding a molecule to “mask” the precursors so they would not be detected as banned substances during transport. Their customers remove that molecule after receipt.

Operation Killer Chemicals made clear that fentanyl precursors are exceptionally cheap and easily purchased online. Fentanyl precursors cost less than one cent per deadly dose of illicit fentanyl and are advertised on social media (on Facebook and LinkedIn). Although based in the PRC, the chemical companies and individuals reached customers across the world through social media, used encrypted applications like WhatsApp to speak with customers and coordinate shipments, and took payment in Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

### Operation Chem Capture

On October 3, 2023, eight indictments were announced charging eight companies and 12 individuals. These companies and individuals—all based in the PRC—were charged with crimes relating to illicit fentanyl and methamphetamine production, distribution of synthetic opioids known as nitazenes, the non-opioid additive xylazine and sales resulting from precursor chemicals. All defendants remain fugitives. The indictments build on prosecutions announced in June and mark the second set of prosecutions to charge China-based chemical manufacturing companies and nationals of the PRC for trafficking fentanyl precursor chemicals into the United States. During this multi-agency operation, DEA seized more than 80 kilograms of synthetic chemicals, enough to make more than 48 million potentially lethal doses.

Operation Chem Capture once again showed that these synthetic chemicals are cheap—a deadly dose costs mere cents—and sold online on public websites and through encrypted applications like WhatsApp, WeChat, and Wickr. The chemicals were shipped through common carriers, by air and by ground through the U.S. Postal Service, UPS, and FedEx, and were carefully packaged to deceive customs inspectors. The PRC based companies accepted payment in every form—Western Union, MoneyGram, PayPal, Alibaba, bank transfers, Bitcoin, and other cryptocurrencies.

### Operation Blues Brothers

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, DEA and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia announced additional charges in the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces investigation arising from the death of Diamond Lynch. Diamond Lynch was 20 years old when she died on April 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C. from a pill that looked like a Percocet, but contained illicit fentanyl. DEA worked jointly with the United States Postal Inspection Service FBI, ATF, and local law enforcement to arrest the two individuals involved in providing the pill to Diamond Lynch. DEA continued the investigation and worked to identify and dismantle the distribution chain that supplied the pills to the two dealers and additional associated sources and distributors of fake illicit fentanyl pills in Washington, DC, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Mexico. Twenty-six individuals have been charged and are in custody as a result of the investigation into Diamond Lynch’s death. The conspirators coordinated their activities – including distribution of the fake pills, selection of pill colors, the number and price of the pills, and shipment and payment for the pills – through social media.

### Operation Pillstop



In 2023, DEA seized more than 79 million fake pills containing illicit fentanyl—a more than 33% increase from the year before. Since 2021, 99.7% of pills seized and tested by DEA that contained pharmaceutical imprints were fake. Drug traffickers use pill press machines and stamps to press illicit fentanyl, methamphetamine, and other deadly drugs into fake pills designed to look like real prescription medicines—like oxycodone, Xanax, and Adderall.

In February, DEA issued a letter to more than 450 entities, including e-commerce companies in the United States, China, and India, reminding them of their responsibility to comply with the recordkeeping, identification, and reporting requirements of the Controlled Substances Act as it relates to the distribution, importation, and exportation of pill press equipment.

DEA has also recently highlighted several cases which resulted in significant seizures of pill presses and the dismantling of clandestine labs operating within the United States, all of which contributed to today's illicit fentanyl crisis. Costing between a few hundred and several thousand dollars, these pill presses could each produce thousands of deadly doses an hour and were used by drug traffickers to illegally press illicit fentanyl, methamphetamine, and other dangerous drugs into pills to trick others into taking what they believed was legitimate prescription medication.

### ***FY 2025 Budget Request – Leading the Federal Government Response to the Fentanyl Crisis***

DEA's FY 2025 budget requested and anticipated funding total of \$3.770 billion<sup>1</sup> will provide DEA with the resources needed to build upon the work we have accomplished to defeat the cartels and emerging drug threats. This funding will enable us to continue our transformation, by drawing on the intelligence from our 333 offices around the world to map the cartels' networks, reveal their global supply chain, and target that supply chain at every step. The funding would also provide additional resources for DEA's Body Worn Camera Program, which supports DEA's continued commitment to enhancing public trust.

The President's Budget requests \$2.687 billion for DEA's Salaries & Expenses (S&E) appropriation, an increase of five percent over FY 2024's enacted appropriation. In FY 2025, DEA expects to face an estimated \$90 million in increased costs to simply maintain current operations. This includes annualizing new positions, pay raises to retain a competitive workforce, and other increased expenses to maintain our domestic and foreign presence.

Since the start of the third wave of the opioid epidemic in 2013, DEA's appropriation, adjusted for inflation, has barely increased by two percent. Providing DEA with increased resources to combat the illicit fentanyl epidemic will build on our actions targeting every step of the illicit supply chain—from charging Chinese chemical companies and their owners for supplying precursor chemicals, to charging the leaders of the cartels in Mexico, and to tracking down the criminal organizations and individuals in our communities responsible for the last mile of distribution of illicit fentanyl on our streets and on social media.

To enable us to continue to modernize and build upon the resources needed to confront the threats

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<sup>1</sup> Anticipated funding includes S&E, the Diversion Control Fee Account, Assets Forfeiture Fund, Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and reimbursable funds.

we face in this moment, DEA's FY 2025 request focuses on the following priorities:

### *Enforcement and Supply Chain Targeting*

Illicit fentanyl is the greatest drug threat facing Americans today. DEA has responded to this unprecedented threat with unprecedented action. We are laser-focused on the illicit fentanyl threat. Defeating the two criminal organizations most responsible for the influx of illicit fentanyl into our country—the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels—is our top priority. We have transformed the way we work by building an entirely new strategic layer of Counter Threat Teams—one for the Sinaloa Cartel, one for the Jalisco Cartel, and one for the Illicit Finance Networks that support them both. These Counter Threat Teams draw on the intelligence from our 333 offices around the world to map the cartels' networks, illuminate their global supply chain, and target that supply chain at every step. It has not even been a year since we established Counter Threat Teams, but we have already announced significant enforcement actions—such as Operation Last Mile, which resulted in 3,337 arrests and the seizure of nearly 44 million illicit fentanyl pills, more than 6,500 pounds of fentanyl powder, more than 91,000 pounds of methamphetamine, 8,497 firearms, and more than \$100 million. Additionally, we charged 28 members and associates of the Chapitos network, including leaders, suppliers, brokers, smugglers, and money launderers in multiple countries. This is an example of the network targeting strategy that the Counter Threat Teams seek to replicate.

The DEA requests \$18,298,000 and 72 positions (40 Special Agents) to establish additional Counter Fentanyl Threat Targeting Teams in eight of the 23 DEA domestic field divisions for targeting and mapping of global criminal networks, prioritizing those trafficking in fentanyl. These teams will be an integral component of the DEA's "One DEA" strategic approach for improving and streamlining operational coordination across the agency by focusing the DEA on targeting, degrading, and ultimately dismantling the highest priority transnational organized crime networks – in particular, the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels. These vast criminal networks have a global reach and utilize sophisticated drug trafficking techniques. Attacking and dismantling these networks requires the deployment of new investigative tools and techniques, targeting capabilities, and a focus on data-driven operations.

In addition to the counterthreat teams, we continue to evolve our network attack capabilities. With the funding received in the FY 2024 appropriation, we are actively bolstering our targeting efforts through improvements to include increased data mapping and sharing capacity and the development of the Trident Directorate. The Directorate will connect the DEA more strongly into the Intelligence Community and enable the agency to be 'a center of gravity' in the fight against the scourge of illicit fentanyl. The Directorate enables the DEA to play offense more vigorously in the U.S. Government fight against illicit fentanyl.

The Trident Directorate will consist of two DEA-led joint operational task forces with individuals from across the U.S. law enforcement, military, and intelligence communities—to use all available tools to defeat the cartels. Finally, this construct also enables the full integration of our offices around the world, our partnerships with thousands of state and local police departments in the U.S. and in foreign countries, and the resources of the military and intelligence communities, to lead a whole-of-government approach to combat the trafficking of illicit fentanyl and defeating the cartels.

### *Body Worn Cameras and Improving Public Trust*

On June 7, 2021, the Department of Justice (DOJ) directed the Department's law enforcement components, including the Drug Enforcement Administration, to issue Body Worn Camera (BWC) policies that require agents to wear and activate BWC recording equipment for purposes of recording certain actions. In support of DOJ's directive, the DEA requests \$15,750,000 and 69 positions (5 Attorneys) for additional resources enabling the DEA to continue with a phased implementation plan of nationwide use of Body Worn Cameras (BWCs) for DEA Special Agents in all domestic field divisions. This request is consistent with the DOJ's commitment to provide transparency and accountability in law enforcement operations while building trust with the communities served. The additional funds will increase BWC data, video storage, and create additional Federal records, which will ultimately promote public safety.

### **Conclusion**

DEA greatly appreciates the \$3.884 million increase that Congress provided in FY 2024. DEA is the lead law enforcement agency in the whole-of-government response to defeating the cartels and combatting the drug poisoning epidemic in the United States. Additional resources would better position DEA to fight the greatest drug threat our nation has ever faced and to protect our communities and save American lives. Thank you for your continued support of the DEA and we appreciate your consideration of our budget request for FY 2025.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the subcommittee today. I look forward to answering your questions.