



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE
Office of the Director

JB Pritzker
Governor

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Brendan F. Kelly
Director

To Whom it May Concern:

During the 12-month period discussed in your letter from April 2020 through April 2021, the Illinois Department of Public Health provisionally reported 3,494 drug fatalities (2021 totals may still be subject to change upon further review). Among those fatalities were 2,849 opioid fatalities, many of them linked specifically to synthetic opioids and fentanyl.

The Illinois State Police effort aimed at impacting this critical issue is comprised of 22 Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (MEGs) and Multi-jurisdictional Drug Task Forces, as well as a statewide criminal patrol unit (CRIMPAT). The MEGs and Task Forces are multi-faceted, engaging in partnerships with educators, treatment providers, and prosecutors among other stakeholders in the interest of stemming the flow of synthetic opioids into Illinois communities and providing resources for those struggling with substance use disorder (SUD).

Our officers assigned to this effort participated in many relevant investigations during the same time period. Investigations undertaken by our officers included drug-induced homicide investigations, interstate interdiction of fentanyl, and controlled purchases of fentanyl from dealers. During this time period, our officers seized over 31 kilograms of fentanyl. This total is not inclusive of seizures involving our federal law enforcement partners where they took possession of the seized substances.

Notably, ISP CRIMPAT and Task Force Officers seized 6,000 counterfeit Oxycodone Tablets following a traffic stop during this time period. Upon laboratory testing, the counterfeit tablets were determined to be fentanyl. Other CRIMPAT seizures during this time period included a 5-kilogram fentanyl seizure connected to a trans-national drug trafficking organization (cartel). MEG and Task Force Officers regularly seize packages from parcel carriers containing illegal drugs including fentanyl as well.

It should also be noted following laboratory analysis, significant amounts of the heroin, methamphetamine, and cocaine seized by our officers during this time period contained fentanyl. Often, drug dealers mix or “cut” drugs such as heroin with less expensive fentanyl as a means of expanding their profit margin. For example, our agents conducting a controlled purchase of heroin from a dealer may find, upon lab analysis of the purported heroin, the substance contained more fentanyl than heroin. Many overdose deaths may be attributed to a lack of consistency in dealers “cutting” with a synthetic such as fentanyl before delivery.

The overdose epidemic and the corresponding flow of opioids and other drugs of abuse into Illinois is a significant concern for law enforcement, public health officials, community leaders, and the citizens of the State of Illinois. While Illinois, like many other states, has established programs to address the host of issues associated with this crisis, we are constantly assessing the best use of our resources to have the greatest impact.

Respectfully,

Brendan F. Kelly
Director