



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

JONATHAN F. THOMPSON
Executive Director and CEO

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cotton
United States Senate
383 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cotton:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the more than 3,000 elected sheriffs nationwide, I write to you today to endorse the Ending the Fentanyl Crisis Act of 2018 proposed by Senator Cotton, Senator Graham, and Senator Kennedy. This Act corrects the disparity between the lethality of fentanyl and the punishments set in the United States Criminal Code.

The opioid crisis has claimed over 180,000 lives between 2015 and 2017, killing more than 175 Americans every day. A third of these deaths were from fentanyl and its equivalents. Dealers mix fentanyl with other drugs, which increases the potency to lethal levels.

According to the CDC, fentanyl is 50 times deadlier than heroin, and 50-100 times more potent than morphine. For reference, just 10 grams of fentanyl has the ability to kill 5,000 people. Fentanyl is not only dangerous to those individuals using the drug, but also to our nation's law enforcement and EMS responders. The underlying drug is so toxic that inhaling small particles has sent first responders and law enforcement personnel to the hospital.

With the opioid crisis on the rise, now is not the time to weaken our sentencing standards. This bill not only supports mandatory minimums for these dangerous dealers, but also provides funding and protection for the United States Postal Service for easier accessibility to life saving chemical screening devices to prevent smuggling and accidental overdoses.

The National Sheriffs' Association strongly believes that this bill is a step in the right direction that is needed to protect and secure our communities, EMS responders, and law enforcement. We applaud the efforts of Senators Cotton, Graham, and Kennedy as they work to combat this epidemic.

Sincerely,

Jonathan F. Thompson
Executive Director and CEO

Cc: Senator Lindsey Graham
Senator John Kennedy
Senator Bill Cassidy
Senator Ben Sasse