



The Washington State Narcotics Investigators Association would like to recognize and endorse the End Fentanyl Trafficking with Local Task Forces Act sponsored by Congressman Rick Larsen and Congressman Dan Newhouse. Our association represents around 500 narcotics detectives that make up numerous multijurisdictional drug task forces, city narcotics units, and special investigative units throughout Washington state. This funding will be critical to help support a proactive focus on drug dealers in our communities that are peddling the poison of Fentanyl to our citizens. We believe far too many lives have already been lost from Fentanyl to include many young people that thought they were taking a prescription drug and it ended up costing them their life. The impact of Fentanyl use ripples through our communities daily.

Historically 18 multijurisdictional drug task forces were funded through a federal grant named after a fallen narcotics detective, Eddie Byrne. In Washington, those Federal funds from the Byrne Jag grant were reallocated to other projects, striking this crucial funding for our communities in the battle against illegal narcotics distribution. Congressmen Larsen spearheaded a bipartisan letter from our Washington state Congress men and women to Governor Inslee requesting funding at the state level to replace the federal funding that had been diverted. Governor Inslee did add funding into the Governor's budget for 1 year. Last week we learned that despite the attempts by our members to educate our Washington delegates at the state level they decided to remove all funding for these multijurisdictional task forces. It has already been announced that multiple task forces around the state are having to close.

We believe it is incredibly foolish to eliminate this much needed funding. Without it, the ability to proactively go after Fentanyl dealers with a collaborative network of multi-jurisdictional task forces, dealers will be able to conduct business with impunity. There are false notions, DEA or other federal agencies have this responsibility. The level of federal agents focus on drug trafficking is shockingly low. They count on partnering with local task forces to complete their mission.

Fentanyl overdoses are still happening in alarming numbers and are going up in rural areas of the state. We believe without this Fentanyl Trafficking Act being passed more drugs to include Fentanyl will be dealt in our communities which in turn will result in more drug addicts committing more crime in our communities to feed their addiction to Fentanyl. Most importantly, we are gravely concerned about the future of our youth in this state and what it will mean for generations to come if this funding is not restored.

We commend our federal representatives in Congress representing Washington for seeing this shortfall and reacting quickly to get the funding we so desperately need.

*Chris Foreman*

President of the Washington State Narcotics Investigator's Association