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25,000+ People Demand Federal Government Declare Illicit Fentanyl a Weapon of Mass Destruction

A record 100,000+ annual drug-related deaths, news that illicit fentanyl is the #1 killer of 18 – 45 year-olds drives grassroots momentum calling for federal action

Akron, OH — Today Families Against Fentanyl announced it had surpassed [25,000 signers of its petition](#) asking the United States government to declare illicit fentanyl a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD). They join a [who's who of bipartisan leaders](#) who are calling for the WMD designation.

The milestone was achieved in the aftermath of CDC data released in 2021 projecting that [more than 100,000 people died of drug-related causes in the previous calendar year](#), and following data unearthed by Families Against Fentanyl in December that found [illicit fentanyl to be the #1 cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45](#) — data that have been [independently verified](#). The announcement also comes on the heels of three Connecticut middle school students being hospitalized for fentanyl overdose after being exposed at their school. One of those students, [a 13 year old, has died](#).

Even more alarming: fentanyl's extreme potency gives it the dark [potential to be used by terrorists in a chemical attack on American citizens](#). Declaring illicit fentanyl a WMD would trigger an all-of-government response to this national threat, activating new resources and manpower to tackle this unprecedented danger.

“Fentanyl deaths doubled in just two years and it’s now the number one cause of death of Americans 18-45. Bold action is needed to reverse this trend,” Families Against Fentanyl founder James Rauh stated. “With more than 25,000 people adding their names to our petition, it’s now crystal clear: Americans are fed up with the status quo. They also see the potential a WMD designation would have to stop this poison flooding our country and killing our loved ones. Declaring illicit fentanyl a WMD is the innovative answer to this crisis — it would allow us to root out the international manufacturers and traffickers of this poison before it reaches our streets. It would cut smuggling of illicit fentanyl into the United States, enhance penalties for the cartels trafficking in this poison, and provide new protections to the American people from this threat.”

“Almost all illicit fentanyl is manufactured outside of the United States. Designating illegal fentanyl as a Weapon of Mass Destruction will empower the U.S. to shift from a policy of mass incarceration of Americans to an all-of-government approach to cut off the supply chain at its source, effectively stopping the flow of this poison into our country. Meanwhile, we can provide compassionate care to those struggling with addiction by investing in harm reduction, expanding access to affordable rehabilitation programs, mental health counseling and holistic care options.”

The Families Against Fentanyl petition will ultimately be presented to the Biden Administration and the U.S. Congress.

Families Against Fentanyl was founded in 2019 by Akron, Ohio resident James Rauh and his wife Valorie following the untimely death of their son Tom from fentanyl poisoning.

Additional information is available on the Families Against Fentanyl website at familiesagainstfentanyl.org.

James Rauh is available to discuss:

- *The growing movement to have illicit fentanyl declared a Weapon of Mass Destruction*
- *Fentanyl's primary role in the alarming spike in overdose deaths, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic*
- *The loss of his son Tom to fentanyl poisoning and how it drives the Families Against Fentanyl mission*

For interviews or additional questions, please reply to this email.

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