



Major County Sheriffs of America

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The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman, E&C Committee
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member, E&C Committee
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Walden,

The Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA) is a professional law enforcement association of elected sheriffs representing counties or parishes with populations over 500,000; collectively we represent over 100 million Americans. MCSA works to promote a greater understanding of law enforcement strategies to address future problems and identify law enforcement challenges facing the members of our organization. We are committed to advancing legislative issues that will enhance the safety of our communities. While we all seek ways to reduce pharmaceutical costs, any exploration of importation must first insure a process that will keep out counterfeit and dangerous substances.

We are writing to follow up on letters we sent the Committee during the 115th Congress that expressed our concern in terms of officer safety and public safety with federal proposals to legalize drug importation from foreign countries. Over the years, various importation proposals to help reduce the costs of pharmaceuticals have been discussed and as representatives of public safety, we caution against any proposal that does not safeguard the American public from counterfeit substances and narcotics.

Our observations have been echoed by our federal partners. As noted in the recent DEA's 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment, fentanyl in counterfeit pill form is both a public health risk and law enforcement challenge in the near term.¹ Even without importation, we are seeing increased counterfeit drugs in our neighborhoods. Importation will make the issue worse by exposing consumers to counterfeiters operating illegal pharmacy websites that may seem legitimate, but are actually selling counterfeit drugs. FDA Commissioner Gottlieb recently reported that the FDA sent a series of warning letters to online networks responsible for at least 70 websites illegally marketing potentially dangerous, unapproved and misbranded versions of opioid medications over the past year.²

We look forward to working with you on this important issue and thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Grady Judd, Sheriff, Polk County (FL)
President, Major County Sheriffs of America

Michael J. Bouchard, Sheriff, Oakland County (MI)
Vice President – Government Affairs, Major County Sheriffs of America

1. (DEA). *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*. Pages 21-37. Retrieved February 19, 2019, from <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2018-11/DIR-032-18%202018%20NDTA%20final%20low%20resolution.pdf>

2. Dr. Scott Gottlieb (2019, February 12). *Statement from FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., on ongoing efforts to stop the spread of illicit opioids, further secure the U.S. drug supply chain and forcefully confront opioid epidemic*. Retrieved on February 19, 2019, from <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm631195.htm>