

# Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking

## Final Report

*Executive summary prepared by the Partnership for Safe Medicines*

In mid-February the [Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking released its anticipated final report](#) outlining recommendations for Presidential and Congressional action to fight the flow of fentanyl within the U.S.

### Main Takeaway

The U.S. needs a nimble, multipronged strategy and Cabinet-level leadership to counter the synthetic opioid epidemic. The Commission called the prevalence of fentanyl “one of our most pressing national security, law enforcement and public health challenges,” calling on the U.S. to “do more as a nation and a government to protect...American lives.”

The report made 21 recommendations, ranked by impact and difficulty, to align the full resources of the US government to fight the fentanyl crisis. The recommendations span supply reduction, demand reduction, and many other critical areas.

### Notable Report Quotes:

*“Through its work, the Commission came to recognize the impossibility of reducing the availability of illegal synthetic opioids through efforts focused on supply chain”*

*“Real progress can come only by pairing illicit synthetic opioid supply disruptions with decreasing the domestic U.S. demand for these drugs”*

### Key Legislators

- Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR), Co-Chair of the Commission
- Rep. David Trone (D-MD), Co-Chair of the Commission
- Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI) – emphasized the need to secure the border against illegal trafficking by Mexican cartels and force China’s hand to crackdown on manufacturing and supplying precursor chemicals

**Non-voting members in the Commission’s work were high-level executive branch officials, including representatives from law enforcement, the departments of State, Treasury and Homeland Security, the intelligence community, and the White House.**

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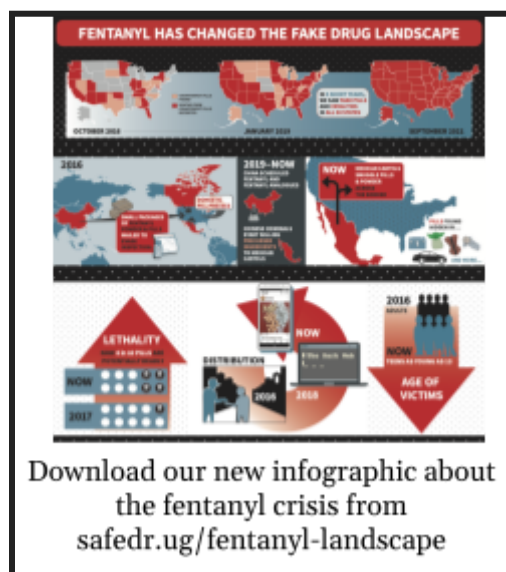
### Recommendation for five “pillars” of government action

1. Elevating the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy to act as the nerve center for far-flung federal efforts, and restoring Cabinet rank to its director
2. Disrupting the supply of drugs through better coordinated law enforcement actions
3. Reducing the demand for illicit drugs through treatment and by efforts to mitigate the harm to people who are addicted. Treatment programs should follow science-based “best practices”
4. Using diplomacy to enlist help from other governments in cutting off the supply of chemicals that criminal networks use to manufacture fentanyl
5. Developing surveillance and data analysis tools to spot new trends in illicit drug use before they morph into major problems for society

### What policymakers should do with this report

This report should not be overlooked because it represents a broad consensus that cuts across party lines and includes seven agencies. Policymakers have enough options in the list of twenty-one recommendations to attack any of those that appear to be easy wins. Some of the recommendations in the report have already been introduced in legislation.

We’re tracking the ongoing efforts in Congress and the White House to implement the recommendations in this report. You can find more information about this report and our coverage for it on our website at:



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