

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 19, 2022

His Excellency Qin Gang
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the United States of America
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador Qin,

We write to you today as the Democratic Leads of the Bipartisan Addiction and Mental Health Task Force, a group dedicated to finding solutions to halt the addiction epidemic. The Task Force is comprised of 140 Members of the United States Congress from both parties representing 38 states, each committed to addressing this national emergency.

Our countries share the priority of stopping the global production and trafficking of drugs by criminal organizations. Our efforts, in coordination with other countries, have expanded international control of precursor chemicals. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) scheduling of fentanyl and related substances in 2019 effectively eliminated international shipments of fentanyl outside of PRC.¹ Unfortunately, international drug trafficking organizations have adopted new methods of production to further expand the global flow of synthetic drugs. This affects all nations, including the United States, which saw 108,886 overdose deaths last year with a staggering 66% linked to synthetic opioids.²

President Biden named combating the opioid crisis as his first priority within his Unity Agenda in the 2022 State of the Union address.³ In doing so, the President highlighted the crisis' significance to the United States. Each year, the U.S. Office on National Drug Control Policy issues a National Drug Control Strategy, outlining a whole-of-government approach. The United States Congress, too, has prioritized addressing Americans' demand for drugs through comprehensive legislation, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.⁴ Congress has also appropriated billions of dollars annually for prevention and treatment within appropriations legislation and additional measures, many of which have been led by members of

¹<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-499.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1665087188343514&usg=AOvVaw1DkMgGmHixvr9kb3TzPRsT>

²<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1665087301065638&usg=AOvVaw3RFOU2EmPkTfOz0vuP7Pb8>

³<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/03/01/remarks-of-president-joe-biden-state-of-the-union-address-as-delivered/>

⁴PL 114-198

the Task Force.⁵ The United States is committed to working with the international community to disrupt illicit supply chains and reduce drug demand around the world. In the coming days, we hope that our countries can build on the progress of recent years.

We were disheartened that the PRC chose to pause cooperation with United States officials.⁶ During this critical time, we urge the PRC to continue to work with the United States Department of State, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Homeland Security, and Office of National Drug Control Policy to stop the flow of synthetic opioid precursors into Mexico, which leads to the influx of illicit drugs into the United States and the deaths of Americans. We also ask that the PRC take action to stem the flow of precursor chemicals from PRC to the cartels. As you know, President Biden again emphasized the importance of these efforts in a July phone call with President Xi and, in recent days, United States Ambassador to the PRC Nicholas Burns has followed up on these discussions in order to coordinate additional action.⁷

As Co-Chairs of the Bipartisan Addiction and Mental Health Task Force, we support international efforts to address drug trafficking and similarly encourage PRC to resume coordination and cooperation with United States federal agencies. We urge PRC to take strong, expeditious action to stem the flow of precursor chemicals from PRC to international criminal organizations responsible for the rising global synthetic drug problem.

Reducing the export of these chemical precursors from PRC to criminal actors is critical to save lives around the world. We appreciate all that PRC has done so far to make progress towards our shared goal of reducing the risks posed by synthetic drugs and look forward to areas for future collaboration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



David Trone
Member of Congress



Ann Kuster
Member of Congress

Cc: Minister Xu Xueyuan

⁵https://trone.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-Trone-Report_4.pdf

⁶<https://www.npr.org/2022/08/05/1115878668/china-taiwan-pelosi-climate-military>

⁷<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-29/us-urges-china-to-resume-talks-ended-after-pelosi-went-to-taiwan>