

Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

May 22, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

CC: The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Dear President Trump:

As strong supporters of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program, we write to urge you to maintain the HIDTA program within the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

Since its creation in 1988, HIDTA has become one of the nation's most important tools in the fight against drug trafficking. HIDTA has received continued bipartisan support from Congress and from law enforcement and criminal justice experts at the state, local, and national levels, because of its well-earned reputation for effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. In 2017 alone HIDTA programs resulted in the investigation of 8,067 drug trafficking and money laundering organizations, and in the seizure of approximately 2,767 tons of marijuana plants, 117 tons of cocaine, 28 tons of methamphetamine, 5.2 tons of heroin, and more than 1 ton of prescription narcotics. Furthermore, HIDTA programs apprehended over 50,923 fugitives in the same year.

Key to HIDTA's effectiveness is its management by the ONDCP. Because it is located within the Office of the President and not a specific agency, ONDCP has been able to be a completely neutral broker. This neutrality has fostered an unprecedented level of continual collaboration between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies across our nation. This neutrality was the cornerstone the HIDTA Program was built upon. In addition, ONDCP has ensured that state and local law enforcement agencies have a leading role in the program's management in each region. This allows each region to effectively tailor strategies to the unique challenges and threats that the region is facing while still focusing on accomplishing the goals of the National Drug Control Policy. This local and state input is critical not only to the effectiveness of HIDTA, but also to informing drug policy at the federal level.

We therefore join the many state and local law enforcement agencies, the National Governors Association, and numerous grassroots organizations and services providers from across the country that have expressed their opposition to shifting HIDTA management to the Department of Justice. While we recognize that it is unusual for an office within the White

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House to manage a federal grant program, we believe that HIDTA's record of success speaks for itself. At a time when communities across the country are struggling with one of the worst drug crises in our nation's history, we respectfully urge you not to disrupt one of the most effective counter-narcotics law enforcement tools in the federal government's toolbox.

Thank you in advance for considering this important request.

Sincerely,


NORMA J. TORRES
Member of Congress


HAROLD ROGERS
Member of Congress


SEAN PATRICK MALONEY
Member of Congress

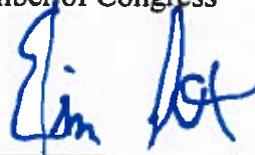

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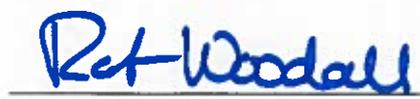

BILL PASCRELL JR.
Member of Congress

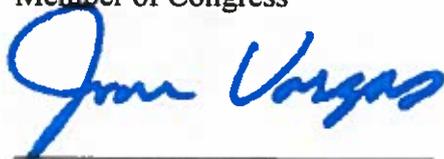

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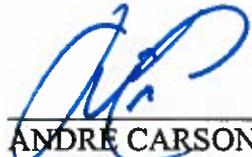

ANDY BARR
Member of Congress



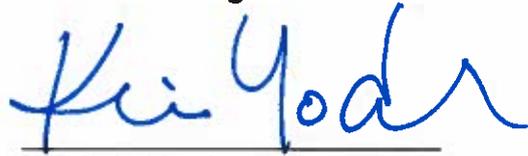
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KEVIN YODER
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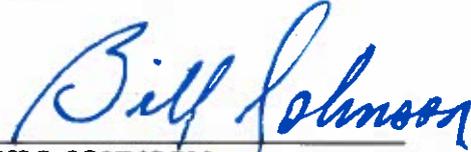
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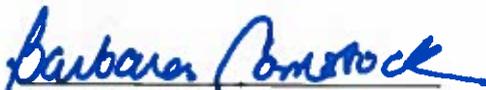
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