

ALERTS

Fentanyl Agreement With China Follows Significant Congressional Action On Opioids

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President Trump and Chinese President Jinping recently met at the G-20 summit and discussed the distribution of the synthetic drug fentanyl. During the meeting, President Jinping agreed to begin designating fentanyl as a controlled substance and punishing those caught selling the drug to the United States with China's maximum penalty.

Fentanyl is a highly addictive drug that is 50 times more potent than heroin, 100 times more potent than morphine, and is currently the leading cause of opioid overdoses and deaths in the United States. It is easy and cheap to manufacture, and comes to the U.S. from China and Mexico.

This agreement with China follows significant congressional action to fight the opioid epidemic. President Trump recently signed into law H.R. 6: SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act, which will help efforts to combat the opioid crisis by advancing treatments and recovery initiatives, improving prevention, protecting communities, and bolstering efforts to fight deadly illicit synthetic drugs. This bipartisan legislation overwhelmingly passed the House with a vote of 393-8 and the Senate with a vote of 98-1.

Additionally, the House recently passed H.R. 2851, the SITSA Act, which would amend the Controlled Substances Act. This legislation will provide quicker action to stop the illegal importation and distribution of synthetic drugs, such as fentanyl. The Senate has not taken any action on this bill, as it is currently under consideration.

We will continue to monitor these and other healthcare-related issues.

For more information about this or other topics involving the federal government, please contact the Barnes & Thornburg attorney with whom you work or Ron Miller at 202-408-6923 or ronnie.miller@btlaw.com.

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