

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

President Biden and Vice President Harris:

We write with grave concerns about the devastating impacts of your immigration policies on Idaho's communities, specifically the tidal wave of fentanyl pouring into our state through the southern border.

Fentanyl is a synthetic killer, and under this administration, it is no longer silent. Fentanyl has become a lethal weapon, killing Idahoans in small, deadly doses. Far too many families across our state have been ripped apart by the loss of a parent, sibling, or child to this poison. Since this administration took office, reported overdose deaths from synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl, have skyrocketed—each year eclipsing the previous record-breaking year. It is a catastrophe wholly caused by the Biden-Harris administration's failure to secure our southern border.

In the absence of leadership from this administration, Idaho is stepping up to fight the threat of fentanyl head-on. In September, the Idaho State Police and the Idaho Department of Education announced a new partnership to educate school-aged children about the dangers of fentanyl. We are grateful for their vision, as increasing awareness about this drug is critical to addressing the risks our youth face due to this administration's recklessness. Our state has also championed an award-winning fentanyl awareness campaign, Fentanyl Takes All¹. Your failures forced Idaho's state and local leaders to do the work you should have done and protect Idaho's children from the Biden-Harris open-border agenda.

Idaho is combatting a crisis created by an administration that chose to prioritize illegal immigrants and political agendas over the safety and security of American citizens. The administration's laissez-faire approach to dismantling drug trafficking operations taking advantage of the lax enforcement at the southern border has caused a public health and national security crisis. It has driven fentanyl overdose to be the leading cause of death for Americans

¹ <https://gov.idaho.gov/pressrelease/year-two-of-award-winning-fentanyl-awareness-campaign-wraps-up/>

aged 18 to 45² and is killing more than 200 Americans every day.³ In Idaho, 197 people lost their lives to a fentanyl overdose last year⁴. In 2017, that number was only 13⁵. Why does this administration continue to cater to illegal immigrants and turn a blind eye to these lives lost, families broken, and futures destroyed?

It is apparent that the Biden-Harris administration's open-border policies have done nothing but imperil national security and endanger law-abiding citizens. Since day one, this administration exacerbated the crisis at our border and undermined the efforts of those trying to secure it. By allowing drug cartels to exploit our southern border, the Biden-Harris administration is complicit in the flow of fentanyl into our country. Idaho families are paying the price.

Despite access to ample tools to combat the flood of illicit fentanyl into our communities, the administration chose to shirk its responsibility. Under President Donald Trump, the U.S. implemented significant measures to counter the flow of drugs across the southern border and restore security. President Trump built hundreds of miles of the border wall, securing key entry points abused by drug cartels and blocking their access to American communities. Instead of building on the success of these measures to reduce fentanyl trafficking, the Biden-Harris administration dismantled or abandoned them entirely, leaving our borders open and communities vulnerable.

Enough is enough. The administration's failure to address this national crisis is not only negligent but dangerous. Idaho deserves better. Our communities, families, and children deserve better. As members of Congress, we demand the Biden-Harris administration take accountability for the drugs and crime that have flooded into our country.

We request that you respond to the following questions within 30 days.

1. What is the Department of Homeland Security's comprehensive plan to track and monitor the flow of fentanyl trafficked across the border into states like Idaho?
2. What is the Biden-Harris administration's comprehensive plan to remove the fentanyl that has already infiltrated American communities?
3. Why did the Biden-Harris administration dismantle effective Trump administration border security measures, and what is the plan to stop fentanyl smuggling now?
4. What is this administration doing to combat the cartels' free range of our open border and trafficking of fentanyl?
5. Will the Biden-Harris administration resume the Remain in Mexico policy, border wall construction, and other effective border security measures to stop the flow of fentanyl into the U.S.?

² <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2023/12/22/fact-sheet-dhs-front-lines-combating-illicit-opeoids-including-fentanyl>

³ <https://selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/media/press-releases/select-committee-unveils-findings-ccps-role-american-fentanyl-epidemic-report>

⁴ <https://eiph.id.gov/pressrelease/international-overdose-awareness-day-in-eastern-idaho/>

⁵ https://www.idahopress.com/news/local/who-is-most-at-risk-of-a-fentanyl-overdose-heres-what-the-data-tells-us/article_e56903c0-d0e5-11ee-b6c5-63ae88f355ea.html

Addressing the disastrous impacts of our broken immigration system on drug trafficking and public safety cannot wait. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of James E. Risch in blue ink.

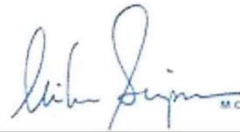
James E. Risch
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of Mike Crapo in blue ink.

Mike Crapo
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of Russ Fulcher in blue ink.

Russ Fulcher
United States Representative

Handwritten signature of Mike Simpson in blue ink.

Mike Simpson
United States Representative

