



## The HIDTA Enhancement Act of 2024 Senator Mark Kelly

For too many years, the United States has grappled with an opioid epidemic that has ravaged our communities. This epidemic has led our nation into an addiction crisis that has become more and more deadly due to the increased presence of fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Senator Kelly's **HIDTA Enhancement Act** would provide law enforcement with additional resources to go after criminals trafficking drugs and stop fentanyl from entering our communities.

### **Background:**

Administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program coordinates and assists federal, state, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies to address regional drug threats with the purpose of reducing drug trafficking, production, and misuse in the United States. There are 33 regional HIDTAs, with HIDTA-designated counties in all 50 states.

Each HIDTA is directed and guided by an Executive Board comprised of law enforcement partners, including local chiefs of police, county sheriffs, prosecutors, and federal agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency and immigration authorities. In 2022, the HIDTAs collectively seized an estimated \$22 billion in illicit drugs and cash.

**The HIDTA Enhancement Act** reauthorizes the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program at an increased funding level and expands its supplemental grants to fund a broader range of eligible counter-fentanyl activities, enhancing support for more initiatives.

Specifically, the bill would:

- Reauthorize the HIDTA program at \$333,000,000 annually through 2030.
- Increases authorization for competitive grants to \$14,224,000 and expands use of funds to include enhanced fentanyl seizure and interdiction activities.
- Direct the Attorney General to work with the Executive Boards of each designated HIDTA to ensure there are sufficient investigative and prosecution resources available for cases involving a fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances.
- Require ONDCP to provide a report within the annual National Drug Control Strategy describing the use of HIDTA funds to investigate fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances.