

Press Release

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How Congress Failed to Act on Fentanyl Epidemic, Despite Increased Death Warnings

The Washington Post recently released an article entitled “Failing on Fentanyl” regarding what they refer to as the “Fentanyl Epidemic”. A timeline was provided that discusses efforts made to aid in the continuous loss of lives throughout the United States.

According to The Post, it wasn’t until 2015, months after the DEA issued a “nationwide alert warning fentanyl use increases in the United States” that warnings began to be issued about the manufacturing of fentanyl in China being sent to United States. As the efforts of addressing this issue of distribution of fentanyl were being conducted, the actual notion of preventing this drug coming into the United States was at a halt. Years went by, but the introductions of this continuous issue, the increase in deaths and the urgency of prevention were clearly still not enough to implement change. Congress did not address fentanyl directly, but took steps addressing the larger opioid crisis. Only in 2017 did Congress come to terms to pass a bill specifically targeting fentanyl, as it was four years after receiving warnings about the dangers of this drug.

To date, approximately 67, 000 Americans have died from overdoses, and the fatalities are still rising. Due to treatment program waiting lists users died before receiving help.

In 2018, a substantial piece of legislation was introduced implying that there will be a requirement of the United States postal service to scan packages from overseas for carrying of fentanyl. This requirement didn’t seem to be very effective as within the following 18 months as the fentanyl is still being distributed. The Post maintains there is a lack of faith among the politicians and policy makers as many make promises to treat the opioid and fentanyl crisis as if it is an unprecedented or an unmanageable problem. Washington’s lack of urgency as the drug emerged as a widespread killer has delayed efforts to address the Fentanyl Epidemic.

The Washington Post is a major American daily newspaper published in Washington, D.C., with a particular emphasis on national politics and the federal government. To read the full article please visit <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/fentanyl-epidemic-congress/>.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. It’s Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled, "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," in order to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE’s website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.