

As Introduced

**135th General Assembly
Regular Session
2023-2024**

S. R. No. 251

Senator Johnson

Cosponsors: Senators Huffman, S., Lang, Romanchuk, Schaffer, Wilkin

A R E S O L U T I O N

To urge Congress to pass the Stop Our Scourge Act of 1
2023, directing the U.S. Secretary of Homeland 2
Security to designate illicit fentanyl as a 3
weapon of mass destruction. 4

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement 5
Administration, fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 50 times more 6
potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine; and 7

WHEREAS, According to data from the Centers for Disease 8
Control and Prevention (CDC), fentanyl has become the number one 9
cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 45; and 10

WHEREAS, According to the CDC, pharmaceutical fentanyl is 11
prescribed by doctors to treat severe pain, especially after 12
surgery or for advanced stage cancer, and may also be used as an 13
anesthetic or in other hospital or treatment settings legally; 14
and 15

WHEREAS, Illicit fentanyl is often illegally made and is 16
distributed through illegal drug markets in different forms, 17
including liquid or powder; and 18

WHEREAS, According to the CDC, fentanyl and drugs similar 19
in chemical structure to fentanyl are being mixed into 20

counterfeit opioid pills, heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and 21
methamphetamine, and people who only use non-opioid drugs are 22
more likely to overdose if they are exposed to drugs mixed with 23
opioids, including fentanyl; and 24

WHEREAS, According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 25
overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl, 26
were reported to be 70,601 in 2021; and 27

WHEREAS, According to the Ohio Department of Health, 28
fentanyl was involved in 80 per cent of Ohio's unintentional 29
drug overdose deaths in 2021; and 30

WHEREAS, U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized more 31
than 27,000 pounds of illicit fentanyl in fiscal year 2023; and 32

WHEREAS, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol's fentanyl seizures 33
have increased more than 800 per cent since fiscal year 2019; 34
and 35

WHEREAS, In 2002, in response to Chechen rebels taking over 36
800 hostages in a Moscow theater, Russia deployed an unknown 37
gas, later confirmed by the Russian Health Minister to contain 38
fentanyl-related compounds, to neutralize the rebels, which 39
resulted in the death of 117 hostages from effects of the gas; 40
now therefore be it 41

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Senate of the 135th 42
General Assembly of the State of Ohio, urge the United States 43
Congress to pass the Stop Our Scourge Act of 2023, directing the 44
U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security to designate illicit 45
fentanyl a weapon of mass destruction; and be it further 46

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly 47
authenticated copies of this resolution to the President Pro 48
Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, Speaker and 49
Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, members of 50
the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio. 51