

# THE TORCH

TEXAS EAGLE FORUM

March 2024

## Weapon of Mass Destruction: How Chinese Fentanyl is Destroying America

By Jennifer Vermeulen, *Texas Eagle Forum*



In the ongoing battle against illegal drugs and substance abuse, a new and deadly adversary has emerged: Chinese fentanyl. This potent substance, originating from labs in China and Mexico, has flooded American streets, contributing to a staggering rise in overdose deaths across the nation. As the crisis intensifies, the intersection of Chinese fentanyl with various social and political issues becomes increasingly apparent. From the challenges posed by the border crisis to the plight of the homeless population, and debates surrounding drug policy reform, the impact of Chinese fentanyl extends far beyond its ability to destroy lives of individual Americans and corrupt our politicians, to tear at the very fabric of American society itself.

### *What is Fentanyl and Where Does it Come from?*

Fentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid pain reliever, typically prescribed for severe pain management, such as in cases of cancer or post-surgery recovery. It was invented in 1959 by Dr. Paul Jansenn as an intravenous surgical analgesic, 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine.

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Because of both its high potency and relatively easy synthesis, fentanyl grabbed the attention of Chinese drug cartels, which began manufacturing the substance in clandestine labs. Today, China remains the primary source of the precursor chemicals to fentanyl, which are shipped to Mexico to be processed and manufactured into synthetic opioids by Mexican drug cartels to bring into the United States.

The drug's potency presents a significant risk of overdose, with even small amounts proving fatal. The size of a lethal dose of fentanyl can vary depending on factors such as an individual's tolerance, weight, and overall health. However, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), a lethal dose of fentanyl for the average adult is estimated to be about 2 milligrams. To put that in perspective, a pinch of kosher salt weighs about 300 milligrams.

Fentanyl-related deaths in the United States have surged in the past four years, with a 70% increase from 2020 to 2023. Fentanyl overdose is now the leading cause of death among U.S. adults ages 18-45, surpassing motor vehicle accidents and firearm incidents, with more than 73,000 deaths reported in 2022 alone.

In many cases, individuals who die from a fentanyl overdose may not be aware that they were exposed to the substance. Fentanyl is often mixed with other drugs, such as heroin or counterfeit prescription pills, without the user's knowledge, in a practice known as *adulteration*.

Adulteration is an especially malicious tactic to increase accidental overdoses, as individuals believe they are consuming a less potent drug or a different substance altogether. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Fentanyl Facts webpage, "In its liquid form, illegally-manufactured fentanyl (IMF) can be found in nasal sprays, eye drops, and dropped onto paper or small candies." Consequently, fentanyl-related deaths have surged in recent years, posing a grave public health concern across the nation.

#### *Fentanyl and our Border Crisis*

With Chinese companies setting up operations to take advantage of lower production costs and favorable trade agreements, particularly lower tariffs on certain goods imported from Mexico rather than China, the timing of China's recent expansion into Mexico's manufacturing sector and the explosion of illegal drugs coming into the U.S. is not a coincidence. Alongside legitimate manufacturing, China's presence in Mexico is also facilitating the production and distribution of illicit substances, notably fentanyl.

The crisis at America's southern border has allowed for the illicit drug trade to flourish, with cartels exploiting vulnerabilities to smuggle drugs, including fentanyl, into the United States. The influx of migrants and asylum seekers has strained border resources, diverting attention and resources away from drug interdiction efforts. Between 2019 and 2023, the number of fentanyl-related seizures at the U.S.-Mexico border more than doubled. In 2023, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents seized 240,000 pounds of fentanyl coming across our southern border, the equivalent of 1.1 billion doses.

#### *Fentanyl and Homelessness*

Fentanyl's connection to the homelessness crisis in America is well-documented. Homeless populations are particularly vulnerable as the availability of cheap and potent fentanyl exacerbates substance abuse issues, perpetuating the cycle of addiction and homelessness. The presence of fentanyl in homeless communities also increases the risk of overdose deaths, further contributing to the tragedy of homelessness in America.

In North Texas, several municipalities have started posting signs at major intersections discouraging people from giving money to panhandlers. While many Christians are motivated by a sense of duty to care for the poor, the risk of inadvertently financing another person's accidental overdose on fentanyl by handing over a little

pocket change is greater than ever.

### *Fentanyl and Liberal Drug Laws*

During the 1980s and 1990s, America's crackdown on drug trafficking, particularly targeting crack cocaine in urban communities, resulted in mass incarceration but did little to curb drug abuse or dismantle criminal networks. As a response to the failures of the War on Drugs, the 21st century witnessed a shift towards drug liberalization. Some states, such as Oregon and Colorado, began to legalize certain drugs, opting instead to emphasize "harm reduction" and "rehabilitation" policies rather than criminal punishment.

Unsurprisingly, the fentanyl crisis is now playing a significant role in states attempting to undo the damage done by their foolish soft-on-crime policies. With Oregon facing rampant drug use, Democratic state lawmakers recently started backpedaling on their drug decriminalization experiment, passing a sweeping reform bill to criminalize possession of hard drugs and make it easier to prosecute drug dealers.

### *Fentanyl and Corrupt Politicians*

The economic impact of the fentanyl crisis is substantial, with estimates suggesting that it costs the U.S. economy over \$14 billion annually in healthcare expenses, lost productivity, and criminal justice costs. But American politicians seem to be facing little criticism for their failure to adequately address the crisis and turning a blind eye to China's role in creating this crisis. Indeed, the inaction on the part of politicians and key officials only underscores concerns about deep ties to China and Chinese businesses. The influence of lobbyists representing Chinese interests in Washington has also raised questions about the extent to which politicians are



## Protect Your Family from Chinese Fentanyl

It is crucial to educate yourself and loved ones, especially teens and college students, about the risk factors associated with accidental fentanyl overdose. Avoiding any experimentation with drugs and alcohol is essential in preventing exposure to fentanyl. Even seemingly non-risky behavior, like using someone else's bottle of medication, carries greater risk today than ever before.

Symptoms of fentanyl overdose include slow or shallow breathing, extreme drowsiness, pinpoint pupils, and loss of consciousness. Emergency responders may administer Naloxone (aka NARCAN).

If you suspect someone is experiencing a fentanyl overdose, call 9-1-1 right away. Use caution to avoid accidentally touching someone or something contaminated with fentanyl.

For those struggling with addiction or seeking support, the Texas Substance Use Helpline (1-844-289-0879) provides confidential assistance.

willing to confront the issue head-on. This failure to root out politicians soft on China has allowed the fentanyl crisis to persist, resulting in devastating consequences for communities across America.

As the impact of Chinese fentanyl continues to reverberate throughout America, urgent action is imperative. Addressing the root causes of the crisis requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses not only law enforcement efforts but also comprehensive solutions to tackle the underlying issues of addiction, homelessness, and border security. Moreover, the liberalization of drug laws warrants careful consideration, as liberal social policies are proving to do more harm than good.

Ultimately, the fight against the fentanyl epidemic starts at home. We must educate ourselves and share the facts with our family and friends. The first step is to prevent, wherever possible, the death of someone you love from accidental fentanyl overdose by talking about the facts with your family and friends. With our homes and families secure, we must then work together to demand truth, accountability, and action from our elected officials in every level of government. The health, safety and future of America demand nothing less.

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## Paxton Sues Texas Cities Over Marijuana

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has launched lawsuits against the cities of Austin, San Marcos, Killeen, Elgin, and Denton for adopting amnesty and non-prosecution policies that violate Texas laws concerning marijuana possession and distribution. The five municipalities adopted ordinances or policies instructing police not to enforce Texas drug laws concerning possession and distribution of marijuana—an illicit substance that psychologists have increasingly linked to psychosis and other negative consequences. Texas Local Government Code forbids any political subdivision from adopting “a policy under which the entity will not fully enforce laws relating to drugs.” “I will not stand idly by as cities run by pro-crime extremists deliberately violate Texas law and promote the use of illicit drugs that harm our communities,” said Attorney General Paxton. “This unconstitutional action by municipalities demonstrates why Texas must have a law to ‘follow the law.’ It’s quite simple: the legislature passes every law after a full debate on the issues, and we don’t allow cities the ability to create anarchy by picking and choosing the laws they enforce.” SOURCE: The Office of the Attorney General of Texas, Press Release, Jan. 31, 2024.

## Invasion: Chinese Nationals are Surging Over the Border

The Biden administration continues to claim that the current crisis along the U.S. southern border is being fueled by migrants fleeing struggling Latin American countries. But the facts tell another story. Chinese migrants are now the fastest growing people group coming illegally into the country from Mexico. Border Patrol agents in San Diego, CA recorded 269 encounters with Chinese nationals in a single day in February. Since 2024 began, the total number of Chinese nationals counted crossing the border illegally is approaching 24,000. To put this in perspective, the number of Chinese arrests during President Biden’s first year in office was 450. Border patrol chiefs in several high-traffic sectors along the southern border have warned that the overwhelming number of illegal border crossers puts our nation at risk because “information can be hidden” and “their agendas, ideologies, the reason for coming could be miss.” SOURCE: Jordan Boyd, “Chinese Nationals are Surging Over the Border - This isn’t a Crisis, It’s an Invasion,” *The Federalist*, Feb. 14, 2024.

## Editor’s Book Recommendation: *Blood Money* by Peter Schweizer

In his new book *Blood Money*, Peter Schweizer exposes the truth of the fentanyl crisis in America and lucrative ties between American political figures and China, which keep them silent in the face of obvious malicious intent. Through extensive research and interviews, Schweizer reveals instances where political elites have profited from their connections to Chinese entities, with former Vice President Joe Biden’s son, Hunter Biden, drawing particular scrutiny for his dealings with China and Ukraine. According to Schweizer, “the Bidens got a lot of money from foreign sources while Joe Biden was vice president,” suggesting potential conflicts of interest. The book also delves into the financial entanglements of other prominent figures, including Mitch McConnell and the Clintons, shedding light on the murky intersection of power and wealth in American politics. With his book, *Blood Money*, Schweizer aims to spark a conversation about the need for transparency and accountability in government, asserting that “the American people need to know what’s happening.” To learn more about China’s deployment of fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction in America, pick up a copy of *Blood Money* today.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.”

- Thomas Jefferson

## GREAT AMERICAN QUOTE

“Virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone that renders us invincible. These are the tactics we should study. If we lose these, we are conquered, fallen indeed... So long as our manners and principles remain sound, there is no danger.”

- Patrick Henry

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## PUBLICATION INFORMATION

TEXAS EAGLE FORUM  
P.O. Box 795354  
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March 2024  
Vol. 37, No. 3