

CADCA and Fentanyl Free America Summit Plenary Session
Administrator Terrance C. Cole
Remarks as Delivered
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General, thank you and the entire CADCA team for welcoming DEA, welcoming us to the 25th twenty annual Mid-Year Training Institute, and joining forces with us in this fight to save lives.

On behalf of the DEA, welcome to the first Fentanyl Free America Summit. When I first returned back to service under Governor Glenn Youngkin, a wise man told me you need to call Sheriff Dennis Lemma. Who is here tonight, from the Seminole County Sheriff's Department, and he runs one of the best programs in the country. And I took his program, we put our spin on it, and we took it to Virginia, and the results speak for themselves. I want to tell a brief story about when we were setting up last night. We met a gentleman here who was part of the staff and who shared his story and had recently lost his daughter to a fentanyl poisoning. His daughter left behind children. This employee's son is also in recovery. You see every single day we hear stories like this. Every single day a life has changed because of fentanyl.

As we sit here today, I look out, and I see the faces of Fentanyl. When I walk into DEA headquarters every morning, it's a constant reminder. It's a reminder that we are fighting for those kids. We are fighting for those families that are here today because they are turning their grief into action. I want to thank you for being here to those families. Thank you for joining DEA to fight this poison. And thank you for understanding the importance of never backing down in order to save Americans. You see it's simple, this is about Americans first. This is about America first. This is a fight we cannot afford to lose. There are three hundred and forty-five million Americans that expect us at the DEA to do our job every single day, and that's exactly what we are doing. To win this war, we must all work together. For 25 years CADCA has helped strengthen coalitions across the country and around the world. You have equipped communities with tools, training, and support they need to prevent prevent drug use, misuse, and protect young people and save lives. DEA is proud to stand with you.

I want to thank Cheri and her team, Katherine and her team, and Sean Fearn, from our Community Outreach program for continuing to push the boundaries, continuing to involve DEA's approach to this problem set. Everyone in this room, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, prevention specialists, treatment and recovery providers, coalition leaders, families, youth advocates, and community partners — thank you. Of those 350 CADCA youth that are here — thank you for what you're doing. Your impact is felt. You are making a difference. Each person fills a role. Whether you're in law enforcement, prosecutors, prevention specialist, treatment, and this is the important part: We need to continue to work together. Every single entity addressing the fentanyl crisis, addressing this demand, more than any one profession, one strategy, or one organization, it demands all of us. Looking out into the room, I feel an immense sense of pride and an even greater sense of responsibility. I'm proud of the men and women at DEA and our federal, state, local, tribal, and international partners for seizing deadly drugs and dismantling the cartels — these networks that poison our citizens. I'm proud of the prevention and the coalition leaders like Susan from Knoxville, Tennessee. You did an amazing job at the walk, I enjoyed it this weekend, and thank you for your effort.

I'm proud of treatment and recovery communities, including people like Kathy Strain of the Partnership to End Addiction who joined the organizations after personal family tragedy motivated her to support others. Because of other people like Kathy, you remind this nation, it's important to be

involved. I am proud that together we are seeing signs of work that are making an impact. You see we're here to strengthen those partnerships that will help end it.

Our goal this week is to improve the blueprint communities can take home, replicate and scale. Protecting Americans requires enforcement, education, prevention, treatment, recovery, and community action working together. This is how we save lives. This is how we build a Fentanyl Free America. At the DEA, enforcement is our foundation. We bring the full wave of this agency to the fight against the cartels, against the facilitators, the distributors, the money launderers, the chemical supply, and every individual that profits from poisoning American citizens. This includes the deadly connection between cartel networks and the Mexican Government. They are one in the same. And at DEA, they are our number one priority.

[Since the beginning of this Administration], DEA has seized over 568 million potential lethal doses of fentanyl. This is partly why this summit matters. Being here together, we send a clear message to the American people, to Washington, and to the cartels that the safety and health of our American people are not for sale. We tell our children they are worth fighting for. We tell families who have lost loved ones that their grief is not forget. We tell people struggling with substance use that their lives matter. We tell the cartels and every individual who profits from this poison that America, our Americans, are united. America is watching, and America is fighting back. We're not simply here to talk about the fentanyl crisis, we are here to call for action. I want to wrap with the following. I know I'm over and I'm sorry. But this past Saturday, we concluded our Fentanyl Free America enforcement operations. It's the fourth event in the last year, and in six weeks, we seized close to four million fentanyl pills¹ in the United States, and 1,158 kilograms of fentanyl powder. Every seizure represents poison that will never reach a child, a college student, a veteran, a parent, or a neighbor. Every arrest disrupts networks. Every prosecution brings justice and sends a message. Every partnership makes us stronger. Thank you to President Donald J. Trump, and the Department of Justice that is led by the Attorney General Todd Blanche. DEA is attacking this crisis from every possible angle.

So it is now my honor to represent, and to present, the man who's leading the charge at the Department of Justice. Attorney General Todd Blanche, a leader who understands the gravity of the fight and the full force required to meet it. Attorney General Blanche oversees a workforce and more than a hundred thousand employees across the Department of Justice, including the DEA, the FBI, the ATF, the Marshals, the Bureau of Prisons, and ninety-three US Attorney Offices. He's been a strong ally of the DEA. He understands what our people face every day, and he's ensured we have the proper tools. You see the Attorney General understands this because he started working at the US Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York as a paralegal and then as a Prosecuting Assistant Attorney. He was in the trenches with DEA. He was working long hours. He was writing affidavits. He was presenting our work in court. He understands the problems we have. He is our Attorney General Todd Blanche. Please welcome him to the podium.

¹ These remarks reflect preliminary results.