



SHERIFF WAYNE IVEY

BREVARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

700 S. Park Avenue ★ Titusville, Florida 32780-4095 ★ (321) 264-5201 ★ (321) 264-5360 fax ★ www.BrevardSheriff.com

Brevard County

Jail Complex

860 Camp Road
Cocoa, FL 32927
(321) 690-1500
(321) 633-0236 fax

Canaveral Precinct

111 Polk Avenue
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920
(321) 868-1113
(321) 784-8340 fax

Criminal Investigative Services

340 Gus Hipp Boulevard
Rockledge, FL 32955
(321) 633-8499
(321) 633-8415 fax

East Precinct

2575 N. Courtenay Pkwy.
Merritt Island, FL 32953
(321) 454-6652
(321) 747-9508 fax

North Precinct

2290 Columbia Boulevard
Titusville, FL 32780
(321) 264-5208
(321) 747-9789 fax

Operational Services

2575 N. Courtenay Pkwy.
Merritt Island, FL 32953
(321) 454-6643
(321) 747-9524 fax

South Precinct

1515 Sarno Road, Bldg B.
Melbourne, FL 32935
(321) 253-6658
(321) 253-6666 fax

West Precinct

2725 Judge Fran Jamieson
Way, Bldg. E
Viera, FL 32940
(321) 633-2123
(321) 633-1965 fax

May 9, 2019

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Oversight Committee,

My name is Wayne Ivey and I have the honor of serving as the Sheriff of Brevard County, Florida. Brevard County has a population of almost 600,000 citizens and is blessed to be considered the gateway to space, as we are home to the Kennedy Space Center where America launches innovation, inspiration and heroes!!

I would like to personally thank you for allowing me to speak to this committee today in furtherance of our national strategy to combat the Opioid Epidemic.

The opioid epidemic is without question the most impacting challenge Law Enforcement has ever faced. For those of us who have been in Law Enforcement for decades, we recall thinking that crack cocaine was the worst thing we have ever dealt with, but sadly we were mistaken. This epidemic far exceeds those realities and will without question destroy our communities if we do not aggressively intervene without delay.

This epidemic has no boundaries and does not discriminate. There is no age, ethnicity or wealth barriers for this plague that is consuming our communities at all levels. The nationwide opioid epidemic is having devastating effects on individuals, families and entire communities. In fact, in my county alone we have felt the devastation at levels that none of us believed possible.

Brevard County is one of three counties leading the state of Florida in overdose deaths. In the past 24 months my community has lost 172 dads, moms, sons, daughters, husbands, and wives to opioid overdose deaths. That's 172 members of our community that were taken from us too soon. As if that were not bad enough, that number grows to 300 in the past 48 months and sadly over 650 in the past 10 years. In addition to those we have lost to death, we also have to consider the impact to families who now have a family member in jail because they targeted the addictions of others for their own greed.

Opioids also come at an enormous financial cost to not only the federal government, but also state and local governments as well. In fact, the financial impact doesn't stop at government, it extends to entire communities including a significant impact on health care and employment.



Communities like ours are not only losing friends, family, and loved ones, which is the ultimate loss, we have suffered a great financial burden due to this epidemic. The rising costs of medical treatment for those suffering addiction and overdoses, for newborns born dependent on opioids, for counseling and rehabilitation, and for law enforcement and first responders, the cost in combatting the abuse, distribution and deaths caused by this epidemic is significantly increasing every day.

As an example to that statement I would offer to this committee that in 2018 the Brevard County Jail had 3,737 inmates who required medical detox treatment while incarcerated in our facility for opiate addictions. In addition, my agency alone has expended well over \$200,000 this past year in NARCAN deployment and investigative costs relating to opioid related deaths and crimes.

Just last week our agency culminated one of the most significant single drug investigations in the history of our community, resulting in the issuance of over 100 arrest warrants for dealers of Fentanyl, Heroin and methamphetamine. These killers known as white powder, brown powder, china white or black tar are historically manufactured and refined in Europe, Mexico and China, laced with Fentanyl and flooded into the streets of our communities. The drugs in our investigation were being delivered to the organization from California, Las Vegas and Georgia, by car couriers and US Mail.

As a result of that investigation, our Agents in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Administration, Central Florida HIDTA, the United States Attorney's Office, the Brevard State Attorney, and Florida's Attorney General seized Kilogram quantities of Fentanyl, Heroin and Methamphetamine.

As our committee members are aware, Fentanyl can be a threat to anyone who comes into contact, as it can be absorbed through the skin, eyes or accidentally inhaled. It is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine and 30 to 50 times more potent than heroin.

The Drug Enforcement Administration estimates there are approximately 500,000 lethal doses in a single kilogram of Fentanyl. The Drug Enforcement Administration further estimates that a 2 milligram dose is lethal for most people.



Using that formula, the amount of Fentanyl seized in our investigation was enough to kill every single resident of Brevard County. This epidemic is not isolated to Brevard, but instead is impacting communities in the same fashion across our great nation. That is exactly why we must address this epidemic collectively at the local, state, and federal levels as well as in partnership with our health care providers and law makers.

Based upon my experience as a 39 year veteran of Law Enforcement, I believe that we have to take a multi-dimensioned approach to stabilizing and eradicating this epidemic. To truly protect our citizens we must shield them with a bullet proof vest that is designed to protect each citizen. If you know anything about a bullet proof vest, it is layer after layer of material that when woven together becomes so strong it will stop a bullet or edged weapon. If one layer fails, the next layer is standing ready to intervene. This type of strategy will be paramount in ending this deadly threat to our nation. If we take a single dimensioned approach to this issue we will not be successful and let there be no doubt, we must execute our plan right now...before another citizen is taken from us!! We cannot delay, or we will be effectively writing off a generation eliminated by addiction, prison and death!!

As such I believe that we should construct our bullet proof vest with the following layers:

1. Education and Awareness
2. Aggressive Enforcement
3. Partnership Enhancement
4. Enhanced Prosecution and Sentencing
5. Life Saving Tools
6. Compassionate Care and Rehabilitation

Mr. Chairman given the time constraints for each speaker, I have taken the liberty of including the specifics for each layer of this recommended strategy in my written statement. If the committee chair and committee members would like, I can expand my verbal comments to include the value of each layer.



EDUCATION:

If you show me a problem in today's world I will show you were Education and Awareness are part of the solution. We have to get into our schools at early ages and educate them on the hazards and dangers of this epidemic. I am a big believer that "we have to get to these kids before they get to me" cause if we do not, then we are trying to fix and repair a problem verses trying to avoid a problem.

Education in schools at an early age is imperative. We need to educate not only the students, but the parents who need to know that when they take their son/daughter to the doctor for an injury, pain pills are not the only answer! This is when it starts and education is the key to where it ends!!

In addition our agency is part of the Opioid Task Force, which is imperative to every county. Similar task forces bring the community together as well as, provide data, resources, healthcare officials, treatment personnel, and education. State, local, and federal entities are all included in this task force and work very well together.

AGGRESSIVE ENFORCEMENT:

Law Enforcement has to continue working joint enforcement details to attack the supply side of these illegal and dangerous substances.

As part of our aggressive enforcement effort we must identify the major traffickers within our communities and charge them accordingly with Racketeering, Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering and other trafficking related crimes to ensure they are subjected to lengthy prison sentences that will keep them off our streets.

PARTNERSHIP ENHANCEMENT:

There are many types of ships in the ocean but nothing calms rough seas like partnerships. Failure to work together on this issue will derail our efforts and quite frankly play right into the hands of the criminal element. As far back as the 80's drug traffickers relied on law enforcement to NOT work together and information share. Author and Drug Smuggler Max Mermelstein once wrote in his book "The Man Who Made It Snow" that drug cartels relied on law enforcement to not share information. He went as far as to say that there were many individual cases being investigated by various law enforcement agencies and had they shared information they would have connected the dots to dismantle the top cartel leaders.



That fact alone is why we rely heavily on agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Administration, HIDTA, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy to provide a seamless delivery of services and information that can collectively be used by law enforcement at the local, state and federal levels.

ENHANCED PROSECUTION AND SENTENCING:

We must work within our judicial system to increase bond amounts for opioid related drug trafficking charges while also implementing drug court to those addicted to opioids. Consideration must also be given to providing opioid dependent inmates with resources upon release that can aid them in continuing their addiction treatments.

Strong consideration must be given to enhanced sentences for those who target the addictions of others for their own greed. By sending a strong message of enhanced sentences to those arrested for trafficking, we help deter future traffickers while also lessening their opportunities to distribute.

Law Enforcement must continue to work with the United States Attorney's Office on Title 21 Violations & mandatory sentencing for prosecution of opioid-related trafficking/distribution cases that result in death.

LIFE SAVING TOOLS:

Law Enforcement Agencies need to be equipped with Naloxone (Narcan) so that they have every tool available to save the lives of citizens as well as Law Enforcement Officers and even K-9's who are inadvertently exposed to opiates. While this is a "must have" resource for law enforcement, it comes with a healthy price tag, therefore agencies will need fiscal support in order to continue to facilitate this tool.

COMPASSIONATE CARE AND REHABILITATION:

Studies show that within three (3) days of release, an opioid dependent person is likely to overdose. That is one of the driving forces behind our agency and community creating the R.E.A.C.H. (Re-Entry And Choices Hub) Program. R.E.A.C.H. assists those who have been incarcerated upon their release from our County Jail by providing them resources for drug treatment, educational and awareness, and even serves as a jobs service by working with our local home builders to provide opportunities for those convicted of crimes to work in the construction industry. Our goal is too lower our recidivism rate which ultimately serves to lower our crime rate.



And lastly, our veterans; we need to work together as a community to ensure our veterans do not fall as we are seeing an increasing number of overdoses within the veteran community. From accidental to intentional overdoses involving opioids, resources need to be made available to ensure our veterans are getting the treatment they need and in a timely manner!!

