

**Crapo Statement at Hearing on National Fentanyl Crisis**  
*May 23, 2024*

**Washington, D.C.**--U.S. Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) delivered the following remarks at a hearing entitled "Front Lines of the Fentanyl Crisis: Supporting Communities and Combating Addiction through Prevention and Treatment."

*As prepared for delivery:*

"Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

"The fentanyl crisis has devastated communities across the country. Far too many families have experienced the pain of losing a loved one from this deadly substance, and the threat it poses to our communities and neighborhoods cannot be overstated.

"In Idaho, overdose deaths involving fentanyl increased nearly fourteen-fold between 2017 and 2022, an alarming statistic.

"It is important to note that this crisis, and the uncontrolled flow of fentanyl into our communities, has not occurred in a vacuum.

"In the last two decades, we saw an unprecedented increase in the use of prescription opioids, causing overdose deaths to rise dramatically.

"Congress took critical steps to authorize programs to reduce the use and supply of prescription opioids, and to expand access to treatment for those who need it.

"In recent years, as prescription opioids have become harder to obtain, illicit fentanyl, a cheap, widely available and potent drug, entered the drug supply, making overdoses even more unpredictable and deadly.

"According to the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency, fentanyl is the deadliest drug threat our nation has ever faced.

"While this hearing is focused on the prevention and treatment, we cannot ignore fentanyl's alarming supply chain.

"It is well documented that China is a primary source of fentanyl precursors and analogues, and I joined several of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in pressing China on its role in the fentanyl crisis on a trip to the region late last year.

"These precursor chemicals are shipped either directly to the United States or to Mexico-based drug cartels and smuggled across the southern border before they are pressed into counterfeit pills, mixed into other illicit drugs, or manufactured into powder form.

“Any conversation about illicit fentanyl must acknowledge the role of this Administration’s porous border policies, which have given drug cartels easy access to our neighborhoods and communities.

“Any efforts to bolster health care services for treatment and prevention cannot fully remedy the fentanyl crisis unless we also eliminate its supply.

“This Committee has acted on a bipartisan basis to consider a number of policies that expand access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment for those who need it. This includes consideration of the Better Act, legislation that was passed out of Committee last Fall.

“A number of the policies included in the Better Act were recently signed into law, including permanent Medicaid coverage for medication-assisted treatment, expanded access to residential substance use disorder treatment for Medicaid patients and guidance to states to improve the availability of substance use disorder services for those enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP.

“I welcome continued consideration of policies that improve the provision of care, including through the use of telehealth, which has dramatically transformed the availability and provision of mental health care and substance use disorder services for millions of Americans.

“This Committee has made a lot of progress in expanding access to care, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on targeted policies that can make a difference and address the root causes of the fentanyl crisis.

“Thank you to our witnesses for being here today, and for all of the work that you do in your communities. I look forward to your testimony.

“Thank you, Mr. Chairman.”