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June 25, 2025

Congressman John Rutherford
United States House of Representatives
1711 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rutherford,

I am writing on behalf of the Community Coalition Alliance, Inc. (CCA) to express our deep concern about the President's FY 2026 Budget proposal, specifically the proposal to move the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to the Department of Justice, and to cut the program by 35%. I respectfully submit that this proposal will have the unintended consequence of weakening the President's vision to build a coordinated national public safety strategy.

CCA is a coalition of coalitions representing coalitions across the state of Florida. The HIDTA has been one of our most critical allies in the work to address substance use and its negative impacts across our communities for nearly a decade. We value not only their partnership in this work but their commitment to public health and safety. As a result of their work, our communities have seen reductions in overdose deaths, arrests for drug traffickers, seizures of drugs, and improved collaboration across agencies.

The current structure of the 33 regional HIDTAs under ONDCP leadership is a proven model of collaborative policing that has saved lives, dismantled violent drug trafficking organizations, and providing a unique platform that has built lasting partnerships among federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and prevention initiatives throughout the nation. The record of agency collaboration speaks for itself. In 2024, on a national level, the HIDTAs have removed over \$17.6 billion worth of drugs from our communities.

As one of HIDTA's prevention partners, our concern is that the impacts of this proposal will weaken the structure of Public Health Integration. Programs like the Overdose Response Strategy, which connect law enforcement with public health experts, rely on HIDTA's unique structure to function effectively—something unlikely to be sustained within DOJ's framework.

Simply put, this is not the time to weaken the nation's most effective multi-agency framework for addressing the threats posed by cartel-driven drug trafficking. We urge Congress to preserve ONDCP's authority over HIDTA and fully fund the HIDTA program. I respectfully request your leadership in advocating for a reversal of this budget proposal. Our communities cannot afford to lose this momentum we and the work being done by HIDTA.



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On behalf of the Community Coalition Alliance, Inc., and prevention partners across the country enhancing public health public safety collaboration to reduce drug overdoses, we thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We appreciate your support in ensuring that the HIDTA Program and ONDCP remain equipped to address the ongoing drug crisis and to protect the health and safety of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Roberts'.



Kathleen Roberts, MS
Chief Executive Officer, Community Coalition Alliance, Inc.

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