



June 24, 2025

The Honorable Rick Scott
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Scott,

I am writing on behalf of Project Opioid North Florida 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.

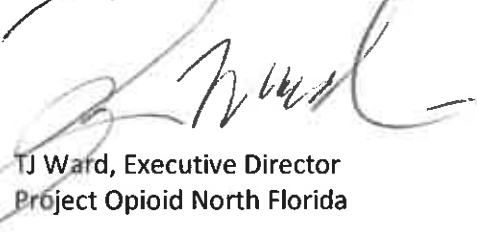
The current structure of the 33 regional HIDTAs under ONDCP leadership is a proven model of collaborative policing that has saved lives, dismantled violent drug trafficking organizations, and provided a unique platform that has built lasting partnerships among federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement 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.

On behalf of Project Opioid North Florida, 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,



TJ Ward, Executive Director
Project Opioid North Florida