



IMPERIAL COUNTY POLICE CHIEFS' & SHERIFF ASSOCIATION

Chief Jimmy Duran
Chairman
Brawley PD

Sheriff Fred Miramontes
Imperial County Sheriff's
Office

Chief Robert Sawyer
El Centro PD

Chief Aaron Reel
Imperial PD

Chief Armando Orozco
Calexico PD

Captain Ernesto Ruedas
California Highway
Patrol

Chief Justin Matus
I.C. District Attorney's Office

Chief Dan Prince
Imperial County Probation

Chief Cheryl Fowler
Calipatria PD

Chief Lynn Mara
Westmorland PD

July 9, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole,
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
H-310 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Meng
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

REQUEST TO FULLY FUND HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREAS

Dear Chairmans Cole and Rogers, Ranking Members DeLauro and Meng,

On behalf of the Imperial County Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association, I am writing to express our strong support for maintaining current funding levels for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program and to oppose the proposed \$102.6 million reduction in the President's Budget. The HIDTA program is essential to the safety and well-being of communities throughout the United States. While this proposed reduction represents a significant cut, it also accompanies a shift in oversight, with the Administration proposing that HIDTA move from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP), which we also oppose.

The HIDTA program, established in 1988, coordinates and assists federal, state, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies to address regional drug threats and reduce illicit drug production and trafficking. By facilitating cooperation, sharing intelligence, and supporting coordinated enforcement strategies, HIDTA has proven indispensable in disrupting illegal drug markets and dismantling trafficking organizations.

The 2025 enacted funding level of HIDTA allocated \$298,579,000 to the program, of which 90 percent of those funds were directly utilized to support state and local law enforcement and task force operations. In San Diego County/Imperial region alone, ninety-nine state and local positions are funded to dismantle drug trafficking operations. Being a border region, it is imperative to maintain funding to support the local staffing of law enforcement, intelligence, prosecutors, demand reduction specialists and support positions.

Cutting HIDTA funding would undermine our ability to respond effectively to the evolving threats posed by drug trafficking, which not only harms regions but also has harmful spillover effects on surrounding areas and the country as a whole. The program's success relies on its capacity to provide reliable law enforcement intelligence and support coordinated operations that maximize the use of available resources. A reduction in funding would jeopardize these efforts and make it harder for law enforcement agencies to protect our communities.

A shift to OJP, as proposed in the budget, would hinder the dynamic and responsive management approach to HIDTA executive boards so they are able to design and carry out activities that reflect the specific drug trafficking threats found in each HIDTA region. This discretion ensures that each HIDTA Executive Board can tailor its strategy and initiatives to effectively respond to local threats. Moving HIDTA to OJP would impose constraints by having it under a federal agency.

On behalf of the Imperial County Chiefs' and Sheriff Association, I urge you to advocate for maintaining the current level of funding for the HIDTA program and its oversight under the Office of National Drug Control Policy. HIDTA is a crucial investment in the safety and security of the American people.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Should the Financial Services and General Government Committee seek testimony on the gravity of this issue, the Imperial County Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association is happy to participate.



Jimmy Duran
Chairman
Imperial County Chiefs' & Sheriff Association