



Gloucester County Prosecutor

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The Honorable Cory Booker
401 Market Street
Suite 240
Camden, New Jersey 08102

RE: Preserve HIDTA Program Under ONDCP and Oppose FY2026 Budget Cuts

Dear Senator Booker,

As a senior law enforcement executive in your state, I am writing to urge you to oppose two deeply concerning provisions in the President's FY2026 Budget Proposal: the 35% cut to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program and the transfer of HIDTA from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to the Department of Justice. These changes threaten to dismantle the most effective multi-agency framework in place for combating cartel-driven drug trafficking and associated violence.

HIDTA's placement under ONDCP ensures impartial, collaborative, and regionally responsive law enforcement strategies. The current structure—with executive boards comprising equal federal, state, and local representation—empowers us to develop and implement strategies tailored to our communities' unique drug threats. This model has a proven track record: in 2024 alone, Liberty Mid-Atlantic HIDTA supported 31 initiatives and removed over \$102 million in narcotics and assets from our streets.

Beyond enforcement, HIDTA fosters intelligence sharing, fugitive apprehension, public health partnerships to reduce overdoses, and officer safety training—none of which can be replicated under a DOJ-led structure. Shifting HIDTA into DOJ undermines its neutrality, regional flexibility, and the public safety progress we've achieved.

Now is not the time to weaken a program that works. We respectfully request your leadership in defending ONDCP's authority over HIDTA and fully funding this essential program.

Sincerely,

ANDREW B. JOHNS
Gloucester County Prosecutor