

Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5524

Title: AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR THE SALE OF FENTANYL.

Vote Date: 4/9/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 4/3/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

REASONS FOR BILL:

Representative Themis Klarides submitted this bill as a result of the increasing numbers deaths and overdoses occurring in this state.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Submitted

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, THEMIS KLARIDES, STATE REPRESENTATIVE: Supports this bill. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has tracked fatal overdoses and found that they have more than doubled in each successive year since 2013. In 2015, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency issued a nationwide alert about the dangers of fentanyl. Often laced in heroin, fentanyl and fentanyl laced analogues produced in illicit clandestine labs are up to 100 times more powerful than morphine and 30-50 times more powerful than heroin.

Here in Connecticut, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner cites drug overdose as the cause of death in over 1,000 fatalities in 2017 and data from the first half of 2018 reveals the state was on pace to exceed that number over the full year. In late January, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) made their largest-ever seizure of fentanyl at the border crossing of Nogales, Arizona. CBP officials noted that this shipment, had in not been seized, could have resulted in nearly 100,000 lethal doses nationwide.

Increasing penalties for the dealing and manufacturing of fentanyl and its derivatives, substances more powerful and deadly than heroin, is a necessary and commonsense change that should have been made years ago. I urge the Committee to pass House Bill 5524 to give our state one more weapon in its battle against opioids.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Submitted

Reported by: George Marinelli

4-15-19