

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 4, 2026

Department of Justice
Office of the Inspector General Berthiaume
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Inspector General Berthiaume:

We write regarding the Department of Justice’s Office of Inspector General’s (DOJ OIG) August 17, 2026’s announcement that it would review “investigations involving the trafficking of substances containing fentanyl... when federal investigators have knowledge, specific information, or probable cause to believe that fentanyl will be transported or distributed to or from, or stored at, a specified identifiable location.”¹ While we are pleased to see OIG initiate this investigation we ask that the Office expand the scope of its review to investigations before 2024 with a specific focus on investigations undertaken by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) within New Mexico.

As you know, current and former DEA agents filed whistleblower complaints alleging that agents within the Agency allowed drug traffickers to deliver hundreds of thousands of fentanyl pills onto the streets of New Mexico.² One of the whistleblowers claims that the DEA surveilled a drug trafficker “who made repeated deliveries of fentanyl from Phoenix to Albuquerque between 2022 and 2023.”³ There is reason to suspect that the DEA’s policies of allowing fentanyl to “walk” stretches back before 2023. For that reason, we believe the OIG should expand its scope of review.

Sadly, New Mexico remains a hotbed of fentanyl trafficking and overdose deaths. Federal data show that overdose deaths fell throughout the country in 2025, yet, in New Mexico deaths rose by 21 percent.⁴ This increase correlates with the time period during which the DEA’s allowed traffickers to flood the streets with deadly fentanyl pills. Thus, we ask that the OIG examine whether the DEA’s decisions led to increased overdose deaths throughout the state.

The people of New Mexico deserve answers as to why the agency charged with seizing drugs instead allowed deadly pills to flood their streets. We ask that the DOJ OIG conduct a full and thorough investigation to bring some measure of accountability to actions carried out by DEA. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

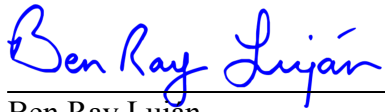
Sincerely,

¹ <https://oig.justice.gov/ongoing-work/review-department-justice-actions-fentanyl-related-investigations>

² <https://apnews.com/article/dea-fentanyl-new-mexico-a29f03d713674d8ff3f5041f470f6277>

³ *Id.*

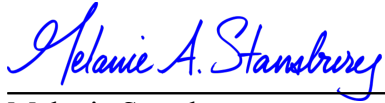
⁴ <https://apnews.com/article/overdose-deaths-cdc-fentanyl-8e3a42544f57eea6a9af3be541178a4d>



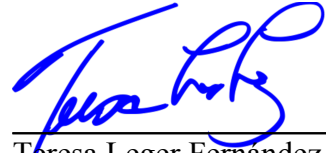
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



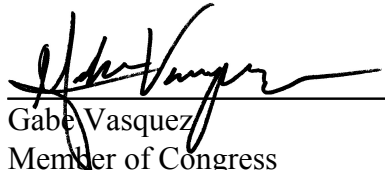
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress