

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of 3 Bills, Subcommittee on Health

July 15, 2026

Today we are marking up three bills to address the supply chains that turn illicit chemicals into counterfeit pills. They target the equipment, the importation, and the production behind the fentanyl crisis.

H.R. 5880, the Fight Illicit Pill Presses Act, requires people to identify tableting and encapsulating machines by serial number so that when law enforcement seizes a press, they can trace it. This bill mirrors the Biden Administration's "Detect and Defeat" Counter-Fentanyl Proposal, which called on Congress to establish a nationwide pill press and tableting machine registry so officials could track these machines and their illicit use. While I support the intent of this bill, I do have some concerns that it will tag unwitting individuals with criminal liability. There may be people who are not intending or are not aware that a pill press will be used for an illicit use.

H.R. 7184, the PRESS Act would make it unlawful to manufacture, distribute, or import pill press equipment with the intent to illicitly produce a controlled substance.

And then H.R. 8005, the Stop Pills That Kill Act, implements sentencing penalties for producing fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, or counterfeit pills, and it requires the DEA to create a comprehensive plan to address counterfeit substances.

We share jurisdiction over these bills with our colleagues on the House Judiciary Committee. I hope we can work together to ensure that we fully understand the real implications of the criminal penalty component to all these bills.

After all, we've made real progress over the last several years in strong, bipartisan fashion to combat the overdose crisis, but an enforcement-only strategy is not the answer, particularly at a time when the Administration's actions are jeopardizing all the progress we've made. This package of bills prioritizes more criminal penalties, more enforcement. We already ran that experiment starting back in the 1980s. Decades of escalating drug penalties did not empty the pill mills. Instead, it filled our prisons while the supply chain adapted and the deaths kept climbing.

We know what does save lives. This Committee's own record shows that expanded access to medications for opioid use disorder, fentanyl test strips, and naloxone helped reduce overdose deaths by nearly 28 percent from 2023 to 2024. That's the largest drop we have seen, and it came from treatment and harm reduction, not from a new felony. At the hearing that

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produced these bills, members agreed on a bipartisan basis that addiction should be treated as a disease.

And that's why the Trump Administration's actions to slash substance use and recovery funding could stunt the progress we have made. The Administration has dismantled the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the agency responsible for addressing the overdose crisis. SAMHSA's staff have been reduced by half and the Administration cut \$1.7 billion in block grants for state health departments and cut \$350 million in addiction and overdose prevention funding.

These cuts are drastic and devastating and if we want to truly protect our communities and win our ongoing battle against substance use disorders, we should work together to stop these attacks from the Administration.

Thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.