United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 6, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Acting Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Via the Office of Legislative Affairs
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Rm. 1145
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche,

We write to inquire about the status of the Department of Justice's implementation of the "HALT Fentanyl Act." President Trump signed this law on July 16, 2025,[1] and it includes significant changes to federal requirements for controlled-substance research. The law sets a six-month deadline for rulemaking by the Attorney General, and this deadline passed on January 16, 2026. The expiration of this deadline and the continued absence of rulemaking or guidance from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) threaten to hinder research for breakthrough psychiatric treatments.

As cosponsors of S. 331, the "HALT Fentanyl Act," we recognize the importance of maintaining appropriate controls over Schedule I substances while supporting and accelerating research that may lead to new scientific discoveries and the development of new therapeutics. Multiple Schedule I drugs have shown significant promise in clinical trials, and several have been granted Breakthrough Therapy designation by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

President Trump's recent Executive Order, entitled "Accelerating Medical Treatments for Serious Mental Illness," articulates the imperative to hasten research efforts, stating, "It is the policy of my Administration to accelerate innovative research models and appropriate drug approvals to increase access to psychedelic drugs that could save lives and reverse the crisis of serious mental illness in America."[2] As psychedelics are currently classified under Schedule I, timely implementation of the HALT Fentanyl Act is essential to accomplishing these objectives.

Following the President's Executive Order and in response to the urgent, widespread need for new and effective psychiatric treatments, we respectfully request responses to the following questions:

1. By what date will the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the DEA establish and publish an updated process for Schedule I research registrations?
2. Has DEA established an electronic portal for submitting research activity notifications? If so, when was it implemented?

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[1] Public Law No: 119-26. "Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act" or the "HALT Fentanyl Act" (July 16, 2025). Online at https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/331/text.

[2] *Accelerating Medical Treatments for Serious Mental Illness*. Presidential Actions: Executive Orders (April 18, 2026). Online at https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/04/accelerating-medical-treatments-for-serious-mental-illness/.

3. What steps is DEA taking to eliminate duplicative requirements, including repeated site inspections and multiple registrations within the same institution or locality?
4. If these steps have not been implemented, what is DEA's timeline for meeting the requirements of P.L. 119-26?
5. What actions is DOJ taking to ensure consistent implementation of the Act across all DEA field offices?
6. Has DEA issued guidance or conducted training on the Act's requirements? If so, please describe.

We request that you provide responses to these questions no later than July 31, 2026. We look forward to your reply and to the implementation of the HALT Fentanyl Act in accordance with the law.

Sincerely,

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

CC: Administrator Terry Cole, Drug Enforcement Administration