



BETTER TOGETHER
NEW MEXICO

P.O. Box 95735
Albuquerque, NM 87199
(505) 235-6323

RE: Support HB 16 Fentanyl Trafficking Sentences

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

Better Together New Mexico (BTNM) brings together hundreds of advocacy groups and thousands of New Mexicans statewide. Our mission is to unite New Mexicans through grassroots initiatives and work to positively shape the decisions that affect our lives, families, and communities.

BTNM supports HB 16 Fentanyl Trafficking Sentences Violent Felonies that will enhance prison sentences for individuals convicted of fentanyl trafficking. This bill rightfully ties penalties that are based on the quantity of fentanyl and the role in the offender in the trafficking operation.

HB 16 would hold individuals who recruit, coordinate, organize, supervise, direct, manage, or finance fentanyl trafficking accountable based on their level of involvement, which sends a strong message of deterrence to those involved in this scourge on our communities.

The most recent information available indicates that in 2023, fentanyl was involved in 65 percent of the 948 overdose deaths in New Mexico. We also know that fentanyl trafficking exacerbates local crime rates, straining community resources and law enforcement. Stronger penalties could help in breaking down these criminal networks.

This issue affects people from all walks of life, including those who might experiment with drugs out of curiosity or peer pressure, not just those with substance use disorders. Too many families in our state have faced tragic outcomes when fentanyl is involved. Anything we can do to better address the crimes related to fentanyl trafficking should be done.

For these reasons, we encourage you to vote 'Yes' on HB 16 Fentanyl Trafficking Sentences.

Thank you for considering my comments,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag
President & CEO