

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS
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Introduction

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and distinguished Members of the Committee: it is a privilege for me to appear before you today to discuss the effects our country's insatiable demand for drugs has on our border, our neighborhoods and communities, the heroic men and women of law enforcement, and on the individuals and their families devastated by the scourge of illegal drug use. You have also asked for my views as the former commander of United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) on the Trans-National Criminal Organizations (TCO) and the illegal networks they manage, and how the production and smuggling of drugs through various countries adversely impacts these societies. Finally, you wanted my thoughts on what Washington—but infinitely more important what we as a society can do to reduce the demand for drugs in the U.S.

To frame my remarks I think it is important for the Committee to know two things about me. First, that until mid-January this year I commanded the men and women of SOUTHCOM one of the six geographical combatant commands. The Area of Responsibility of that Miami based headquarters includes all of the countries and principalities south of the U.S., with the notable exceptions of Mexico, the Bahamas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. You can be confident that what I've submitted in my written statement, and my answers to any questions you may ask, will be accurate and the truth as I know it. The responses will not be coming from another recently retired general who is now telling all. I have said all of these things, and made all of these points, endlessly in innumerable official meetings in Washington, Brasilia, Bogota, Lima, Tegucigalpa, Guatemala City, indeed throughout the region, and in all of my open and closed congressional office calls and hearings, and to the press, during my 39 months in command of USSOUTHCOM.

It is very important for you to fully recognize that from this region of the world—our own neighborhood, that effectively 100% of the heroin and cocaine, and perhaps 90% of the methamphetamines that plague our fellow citizens—poor and rich, working class and middle class, black and white—are produced and trafficked. This region, particularly from Mexico, is also the source of enormous quantities of pirated pharmaceuticals. The illicit production and transport of these pharmaceuticals took off as a growth industry for the TCOs beginning not so many years ago when the combination of legislation from this body and the aggressive actions on the part of U.S. law enforcement, particularly the FBI, effectively targeted unprincipled and criminal medical practitioners in the U.S. These individuals in the business of writing illegal prescriptions for extremely addictive and routinely abused painkillers like oxycodone and percocet created an illicit industry likely worthy billions in its heyday. As this illicit trade was increasingly choked off in the U.S. the cartels, international businessmen as they are, recognized the demand and filled the demand including the production, trafficking and distribution into the U.S. Regardless of where they are produced these pharmaceuticals are still relatively expensive and increasingly hard to come by, which then increased the demand for very cheap, very addictive, and readily available heroin. Of course the cartels then responded to this demand and so the business of meeting our drug demands goes on. Simply put, then, Mexico is the source of heroin and meth—and this includes the growing and harvesting of nearly 40,000 acres of poppies (DEA estimates) and the labs to produce industrial quantities of both drugs using precursor chemicals imported in bulk from Asia.

Cocaine bound for the U.S. market, on the other hand, is grown, manufactured and sent north along the network comes primarily from Colombia. Unknown to many, Colombia is our very best ally in the region across a range of regional and international issues, and a country with

whom the U.S. has a decades long and very strong “special relationship” as specifically acknowledged recently by President Obama when introducing Colombian President Santos here in Washington. Colombia does more to help solve our demand problem than do we. For years they have eradicated 40,000 acres of coca annually, destroyed thousands of labs, and just last year seized nearly 200 metric tons of cocaine before it ever left their country. They have done this selflessly and at an incredibly high cost in the blood of their military and police professionals. We have helped them in this decades long effort particularly in the area of information and intelligence sharing, and encouragement. What they have done internally dealing with the terrorist group they have been battling for over 50 years, and in the fight against cocaine trafficking over the last 25 years working with the U.S. as an equal partner under “Plan Columbia,” is nothing less than miraculous.

Mr. Chairman I think the Committee knows this, and if it does not it should, Colombia is an exporter of security to the rest of the region. The relationship is a terrific example of how sustained U.S. support based on mutual respect and equal partnership can help a people gain control of their security situation, strengthen government institutions, eradicate corruption, and bolster their economy. As I have mentioned Colombia’s turnaround is nothing short of astonishing, and today it is a leader among many strong partners to improve stability in the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Chairman, I am confident you and the Committee know that the United States has a special relationship with only a handful of countries. These relationships are based on a firm foundation of trust and are with nations that value the same things we do—family and opportunity for our children, a free press, democracy and rule of law, safe streets, respect for human rights—and we rely on partnerships with such countries to work with us in

achieving regional stability, countries that we look to for international involvement and leadership, countries that we consider our strongest friends and most steadfast allies.

Colombia unquestionably plays that role in Latin America, but also in parts of Africa, the Middle East, on UN missions and other commitments including dispatching one of their frigates to join the international effort to counter-piracy on the high seas in the vicinity of Somalia and Yemen. Closer to home, and through the “U.S. - Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security,” Colombia provides vital assistance to its Central American, Caribbean and Mexican neighbors in the fight against criminal networks. They are vitally important in this endeavor because the U.S. military given all of the demands in other more violent or potentially more violent reaches of the world, is unavailable for this critical duty in the Western Hemisphere. And I want to note here that every aspect of U.S. collaboration under this Plan, including activities conducted by Southern Command, is facilitated through U.S. security assistance and governed by the same U.S. laws and regulations—especially those requiring the human rights vetting of units—regulating the activities of our own military personnel. Colombia is also the example to every other nation in the region that stares into the bottomless abyss of failed statehood. Colombia once stared into this same darkness, an abyss due largely to the activities of the region’s “narco-terrorist” organizations responding to the demand for drugs in the United States, but they changed everything and won. They changed their laws, their tax code, their business environment, their approach to counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, their approach to democracy and human rights—and they won.

The vast majority of the tonnage of all four of these drugs—heroin, meth, cocaine, and pharmaceuticals—are then trafficked by the Trans-National Criminal Organizations via the Central American - Mexican criminal network(s) directly into the U.S. This network-of-

networks, by the way, is generally controlled by the Mexican cartels with many subcontractors interspersed throughout the region and the world for that matter. The enterprise begins in the jungles of Colombia, runs along the Central American transit vector, into Mexico. Once in Mexico so effective are the cartels in taking advantage of the laws, corruption and intimidation, of that country and our own, their illicit cargo—drugs, people or anything else that can pay to ride the network—can already be considered to be in Madison, Wilmington, Phoenix, Columbus, Billings, Cheyenne, Boston, and Manchester. The distribution networks reach deep inside every U.S. city, small town, rural community and neighborhood. The men and women involved in this enterprise are among the most cruel and violent on the planet, are unencumbered by morals, laws or regulations, other than to maximize profits. They do not check passports, inspect bags, conduct body scans, or test for explosive residue. Anything and anybody can travel on this network so long as the price can be met, and, frankly, the fare is very reasonable considering.

As an aside, Peru with whom we have very good relations in the military, law enforcement and political realms, and Bolivia who we do not, are the first and second largest producers of cocaine in the world—which is the big profit maker. The production from these two nations feed the world market carried by equally efficient and violent networks that flow west across the Pacific, and east through Brazil and increasingly through Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina to Africa, Europe and the Middle East. And with trafficking eventually comes consumption. For example, the U.S. is the #1 consumer of cocaine in the world. Brazil, until a few years ago was not a consumer nation at all, but once the network was established it is only a matter of time until the cartels and network “managers” develop a market until today with Brazil achieving the dubious status of being the #2 consumer in the world. The Paraguayans, the Argentines, indeed any transit country will quickly experience the same phenomenon.

Members of the Committee, much like Colombia was able to accomplish over the last 15 years our friends across the region are committed to winning back their streets, indeed their countries, from criminal gangs and drug traffickers, and doing so while protecting human rights. The Hondurans, Guatemalans, El Salvadorans, Jamaicans, Dominicans, they are all ready and willing to partner with the United States. They are eager for expanded cooperation and increased learning and training opportunities with the U.S. military and law enforcement. But they are very frustrated by what they perceive as the low prioritization of Latin America and the Caribbean on our national security and foreign policy agendas, which is especially puzzling given the shared challenges of transnational organized crime and narco-terrorism. They are also frustrated in the current approach the U.S. is taking towards drugs as we move forward towards outright legalization or *de facto* legalization by expanding the “medical” use of drugs like marijuana. They also cringe when Americans in any capacity or role make the case that “recreational” use of drugs is “harmless,” or that the vast majority of drug dealing on our streets is non-violent. All this, while we continue to encourage and often times criticize our friends to the south for not doing what we think is enough to reduce production, or impede the transport of these killer substances through their national territories to the U.S.

In the world in which they live—the Mexicans, Central Americans, Colombians, Peruvians, and across the Caribbean including Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands—in their world there is no such thing as a “non-violent” drug deal as thousands die annually in their countries as a result of the business of supplying drugs to the American market. Good, decent and honest police officers and soldiers, judges and prosecutors, legislators and journalists, officials from the various ministries—and their wives, children, mothers and fathers, their entire families—are intimidated, corrupted or killed so that Americans can get high on weekends or spend their time

“Chasing the Dragon” of addiction. The word “hypocrisy” often times comes up when one speaks with our friends to the south because we do little, certainly in their view, to reduce the demand.

If it is not obvious as this point, I will cut to the bottom line and tell you that the fundamental factor that drives the entire illicit enterprise is our country’s demand for heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine, and opiates in pill form. I do not even include marijuana and the many synthetic offshoots which in and of itself is a major factor in so many social ills. It is in fact a “gateway drug” to more destructive illegal drug use, and its use results in a great many destructive physical effects on the brain, the user’s health, and social development. Many hoping to cash in on the emerging commercial enterprise that is legal or medical marijuana work hard to discount or deny these facts, but they are facts. It is at the same time ludicrous and inconceivable to me why with all the Americas already struggling with drug and alcohol addiction that we would make available even more substances to poison the body and confuse the brain. To make the powerful modern-day drug that is marijuana available on demand and compound the problem.

Mr. Chairman, it is a fool’s position to think that the tax revenue raised by legal sales will offset the physical and social costs of its use. Indications and warnings are already coming in from those states that have legalized the drug or allowed widespread “medical” use and abuse, but something to consider is what the DEA would tell you and that is for every dollar raised from two drugs already legal—tobacco and alcohol—amounts approaching 23 and 17 dollars respectively are paid out by the already overburdened taxpayer to deal with the effects of these two drugs. If those public officials voting to legalize pot either by outright legalization, or via the dispensing of medical marijuana, were responsible they would most certainly, and

responsibly, consider the additional burden that it will have on the tax payer and add additional tax by say 17x onto the price of the drug at the counter.

Our drug demand, including marijuana, to a large degree has wrought devastating consequences in many of our partner nations, degrading their civilian police and justice systems, corrupting their institutions, and contributing to a breakdown in citizen safety. The tentacles of global networks involved in narcotics and arms trafficking, human smuggling (including the 18,000 young women and boys the UN tells us are smuggled into the U.S. every year to serve as sex slaves) , illicit finance, and other types of illegal activity reach across Latin America and the Caribbean and into the United States, yet we continue to almost ignore the threat TCOs present to our homeland and the significant and direct risk to our national security and that of our partner nations. Unless confronted by an immediate, visible, or uncomfortable crisis, our nation's tendency is to take these threats that ride the networks into and through the Western Hemisphere for granted or hope for the best. I believe this is a huge mistake. I believe hope was and is the same approach the Europeans in general, and the French and Belgians specifically, took regarding their borders—and they lost.

In 2014 estimates there were nearly half a million migrants¹ from Central America and Mexico—including over 50,000 unaccompanied children (UAC) and families—were apprehended on our border, many fleeing violence, poverty, and the spreading influence of criminal networks and gangs. Assistant Secretary of State Roberta Jacobson testified that the “UAC migration serves as a warning sign that the serious and longstanding challenges in Central

¹ U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, *FY 14 Border Security Report*. According to the CBP, 239,229 migrants from the Northern Tier countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador were apprehended in 2014, representing a 68% increase compared to FY 13. 229,178 migrants from Mexico were apprehended, a 14% decrease.

America are worsening.”² In my opinion, the relative ease with which human smugglers moved tens of thousands of people along the networks also serves as another warning sign: these smuggling routes are a potential vulnerability to our homeland. As I stated many times in open hearings to the House and Senate defense committees, terrorist organizations could easily leverage those same smuggling routes to move operatives or materiel with intent to cause grave harm to our citizens. Mr. Chairman, Members, addressing the root causes of insecurity and instability is not just in the region’s interests, but ours as well. This is why responsible public officials never surrender in the effort to highlight the threat and support the Congress’ and administration’s commitment to increase assistance to Central America, Colombia and other partners in the region—help which should be viewed as an investment and not foreign aid.

These and other challenges underscore the enduring importance of protecting the southern approaches to the U.S., and this cannot—should not—be attempted as an endless series of “goal-line stands” on the one-foot line at the official ports-of-entry or along the thousands of miles of border between this country and Mexico. The men and women of the Department of Homeland Security and local law enforcement that work that border are highly skilled and incredibly dedicated, but overwhelmed. They are overwhelmed by the efficiency of the network and the funding the cartels have to guarantee their illicit products and people will get through. The effort to get at our drug demand begins, or should begin, on the cartel’s end of the field and with a much greater effort. The U.S. military is almost absent in the effort due to an almost total lack of naval forces, although the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul Zukunft USCG, seeing the dire need immediately upon assuming his current duties increased the number

² Testimony of Roberta Jacobson, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, United States House of Representatives, November 18, 2014.

of cutters and personnel committed to the effort. The Coast Guard's cupboard is nearly bare, however, given all the commitments the men and women of that organization are required to address in the waters surrounding the United States with an insufficient number of National Security Cutters and other vessels to do what they need to do globally. Our Coast Guard has more demands on it than it can address, but try they do and they are amazing.

The incredibly strong partnerships I enjoyed as the SOUTHCOM commander with the U.S. interagency—especially with the Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard, DEA, FBI, ATF, the intelligence community and the Departments of Treasury and State all fused together by the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-South (JIATF South) in Key West —were and are fundamental to the efforts to try and safeguard the southern defense of the U.S. homeland from. If you want a report card on how effectively the interagency is accomplishing the mission, how the effort to prevent malign cargo and illegal migrants from entering the country is going, I will let you draw your own conclusions. I will say, however, that even though we are so incredibly fortunate to have willing partners like Colombia, Chile, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama, and remarkable interagency cooperation, it's the demand...it's always about the demand.

Domestic Impact

Americans have been consuming hard drugs in immense quantities certainly since the mid-1960s when the use of drugs became literally cool as projected by Hollywood, social “progressives,” and even Harvard professors. Since then it has ebbed and flowed—although mostly flowed—over the years, but regardless of what the immediate use trends were along the timeline it has always been a constant in the inner city and working class neighborhoods of our cities. The epidemic we talk about and are so rightly concerned with today is due in very large

measure because the addiction, and the associated violent crime and deaths due to overdose, are no longer a problem of our minority and working class neighborhoods. The death and crime has exploded into the suburbs. The body count is now conducted on Capitol Hill and in Georgetown, on Beacon Hill and the ivy league and Stanford campuses, and not just in the urban areas of our great cities.

Until the last few years the number of our citizens dying from the use of hard drugs trafficked into the United States from abroad by narco-terrorist transnational criminal syndicates, or acquired through illegal prescriptions, hovered around 40,000 annually. To put it another way since 9/11 when 3,000 were killed by another form of terrorism, over 560,000 have been in my view murdered by narco-terrorists. In the past few years even the outrageous number of 40,000 began to spike until last year the number went beyond 46,000. The DEA tells us that in 2013 there were 8,620 heroin deaths due to overdose. These deaths are increasing everyday across the land but particularly in states in the Middle Atlantic, New England and the Midwest. In fact the Center for Disease Control puts the number at 44 a day or over 16,000 a year. To put a more focused face on this growing tragedy, in 2014 the New Hampshire Office of the Chief Medical Examiner predicted more than 400 deaths from heroin overdoses in 2015 which would have been more than double the amount that small state of only 1.3 million experienced in 2013. He was wrong. It was higher. Senator Ayotte among others in this body has been a champion of raising the awareness of the issue not only in her own state, but nationally, but in my view it has in many ways fallen on deaf ears as solving this problem will be hard, really hard, maybe too hard—but I think it is worth trying.

Other impacts on our society are obvious even to the numb. Law enforcement figures tell us that a very-large percentage of individuals arrested for major crimes—including homicide,

theft and assault—are under the influence of illicit drugs. The same sources tell us that 93% of those abusers believe they do not need help even while they are committing violent crimes or selling their bodies to feed their habits, in and out of rehab, or saved multiple times when they are found in the gutters and “crack houses” by police officers and first responders. Most of these abusers started with the gateway drug that marijuana most certainly is, and even while abusing heroin are also routinely using at least one other drug. And the dollar cost is immense with the estimate at over \$200B to deal with drug abuse; much of it on rehabilitation that most agree is at best marginally effective even over the short term.

Security Environment

As stated in the introduction the end results of decades of rampant demand for drugs in the U.S.—and even if we do not care what it is doing to our own society—has caused the spread of criminal organizations that continue to tear at the social, economic, and security fabric of our Mexican, Latin American and Caribbean neighbors. Powerful and well-resourced, these TCOs traffic in drugs—including cocaine, heroin, marijuana, counterfeit pharmaceuticals, and methamphetamine—but have evolved grown in size and sophistication. They have also broadened the services and products they provide. The cartels and networks now largely control the sale and movement of small arms and explosives, precursor chemicals for use in producing industrial quantities of heroin and meth, illegally mined gold which is unbelievably destructive to fragile environments, counterfeit goods, people, and other contraband. They engage in pervasive money laundering, bribery, intimidation, and assassinations at every level of society from the cop on the street to the president of a country. They threaten the very underpinnings of democracy itself: citizen safety, rule of law, and economic prosperity. They have turned particularly Central America and Mexico into among the most dangerous nations on earth by UN numbers of deaths

per 100,000 citizens. They have had the very same impact on our own Puerto Rico and the Americans who reside there. And these criminal cartels pose a direct threat to the stability of our partners and an insidious risk to the security of our nation. If these groups were motivated politically to destroy these countries and bring down these governments by violence we would label them insurgents and lend appropriate support, as we have in Colombia and Peru, to help them fight the narco-terrorist organizations that are The Shining Path and FARC. But because they are motivated by crime and profit, and not aggressive politics or extremist ideology, and despite the fact that are directly and indirectly killing 40,000+ of our citizens every year, many in our government hide make the case that this is law enforcement as opposed to a military problem. I can assure you it is both and the partner nations at risk have no choice but to re-train their military units for internal police duties.

While there is growing recognition of the danger posed by transnational organized crime, it is often eclipsed by other concerns. Frankly, Mr. Chairman, I believe we are overlooking a significant security threat. Despite the very effective efforts of the men and women of law enforcement, TCOs are constantly adapting their methods for trafficking anything and everything, and anybody, across our border. While there is not yet any indication that the criminal networks involved in human and drug trafficking are interested in supporting the efforts of terrorist groups, these networks could unwittingly right now facilitate the movement of terrorist operatives or weapons of mass destruction toward our borders, potentially undetected and almost completely unrestricted. In addition to thousands of Central Americans fleeing poverty and violence, foreign nationals from countries like Somalia, Bangladesh, Lebanon, and

Pakistan are using the region's human smuggling networks to enter the United States.³ While many are merely seeking economic opportunity or fleeing a “narco-insurgency” that we have largely created, a subset could potentially be seeking to do us grave harm. Thankfully, we have not observed any hard evidence of this occurring...yet. That said, however, as was the case in Boston, or San Bernardino, or Paris or Brussels—and despite the best efforts of our overworked and underappreciated intelligence professionals most notably the CIA, DIA and NSA, and our embattled law enforcement including the FBI, ATF, CBP and Border Patrol, and the uniformed officers on the street—we often learn that the terrorists are here only when the bomb goes off and the body count has begun. I am deeply concerned, and you should be deeply concerned as our elected leaders, that smuggling networks are a vulnerability that terrorists could seek to exploit. I do not see it as a maybe, but as a when.

You should also be troubled by the financial and operational overlap between criminal and terrorist networks in the region. Although the extent of criminal-terrorist cooperation is unclear, what is clear is that terrorists and militant organizations easily tap into the international illicit marketplace to underwrite their activities and obtain arms and funding to conduct operations.⁴ It's easy to see why: illicit trafficking is estimated to be a \$650 billion industry worldwide—larger than the GDP of all but 20 countries in the world—and less than one percent of global illicit financial flows is seized or frozen.⁵ It is estimated that the profits from cocaine sales alone in the U.S. go beyond \$80B. Indeed, the biggest problem the narco-terrorists have is not getting drugs into the U.S., but laundering the immense profits from the enterprise. The

³ Texas Department of Public Safety, *2013 Threat Assessment*.

⁴ According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, twenty-two of the fifty-nine Department of State designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations are linked to the global drug trade.

⁵ United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. *Estimating Illicit Financial Flows Resulting from Drug Trafficking and Other Transnational Crimes*. Geneva, 2011.

terrorist group Lebanese Hezbollah—which has long viewed the region as a potential attack venue against Israeli or other Western targets—has supporters and sympathizers in Lebanese diaspora communities in Latin America, some of whom are involved in lucrative illicit activities like money laundering and trafficking in counterfeit goods and drugs. These clan-based criminal networks exploit corruption and lax law enforcement in places like the Tri-Border Area of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina and the Colon Free Trade Zone in Panama and generate revenue, an unknown amount of which is transferred to Lebanese Hezbollah. Unfortunately, our limited intelligence capabilities focused on this accumulation of funding make it difficult to fully assess the amount of terrorist financing generated in Latin America, or understand the scope of possible criminal-terrorist collaboration in this region of immense-illicit funding.

Demand Reduction

As a nation we cannot interdict, or shoot, or convict, or rehabilitate our way out of this hell. It will take all of these approaches and more to solve the problem and significantly reduce drug abuse. If U.S. drug demand is a large part of the problem, then reducing that demand is essential to getting our arms not only around the problems in our own country, but also the problem our demand cause our partner nations and the support it gives to terrorism. Demand reduction is to say the least a multi-faceted challenge. It begins in the coca or poppy fields hundreds of miles south of our border with Colombian soldiers killed by IEDs, and the families of Mexican Marines murdered in retaliation for their efforts in our drug fight. It ends in the U.S. in a rehab clinic somewhere inside our country.

But we know how to do this. We know how to design a campaign to save lives and significantly reduce a social cancer. When I was in grade school the Center for Disease Control

informs us that roughly 70% percent of Americans smoked cigarettes. A pack was maybe .30 cents. At nine or ten years old I would routinely walk down to the corner store and buy a pack of Chesterfields for my mother or Camels for my father. Lung cancer was off the chart. Today the CDC estimates that less than 20% of Americans smoke. This unbelievable behavior modification was accomplished first and foremost by an effective and never ending campaign to make Americans wake up to what smoking does to the body, then by raising the price per pack so that it is out of the reach of most intelligent Americans, insurance premiums went up if you smoked, the legal age to purchase was fixed at 18 and is now going to 21 in many states, and by severely limiting where one can light up and essentially making smokers outcasts. It worked.

We also did it to battle and significantly reduce drinking-and-driving saving hundreds of thousands of lives and significantly reducing serious injury due to automobile accidents. The very same applies to seat belt use. Forty 40 years ago no one “buckled up,” today only the most irresponsible among us would even start an automobile without first fastening their kids in, then themselves. The same applies to car seats for infants and small children, helmets for young bikers, and even to reducing littering along our streets and highways. The success of these campaigns was not only law enforcement, although law enforcements and penalties were without question part of the solution. As in the case of auto deaths and injury, the success came as a result of a comprehensive and an unrelenting campaign of educating our citizens across every age group focusing on children and young adults in school, new drivers and their parents, and the older generations who until the campaigns were unleashed in the early 1980s just assumed that the carnage our society was experiencing on the highways was simply the price required of a motorized society. But it wasn't.

Hollywood got behind the effort, as did responsible politicians and civic officials. No elected official in his or her right mind opposed it even with intense lobbying efforts by Detroit first against installing seat belts then over mandatory air bags, and certainly did not try to rationalize the problem away and raise tax revenue from it. Everyone got on board—and it worked. Anyone under the age of say 40 today simply cannot imagine a time when we did things differently, when we did not have seat belts and air bags, but there was a time we did. As with the campaign today to raise awareness of climate change—whether one agrees or disagrees with the cause and effect claims—all are at least fully aware of the issue. Even those who reject the science have reduced their energy consumption and know it is good for the environment. We know how to do this, and it is the only way to not only reduce the cost and misery to our own people, but also to the nations to our south who suffer so from our demand. We will never get to zero, but perhaps we can reduce the abuse of drugs by over 50% as we did with nicotine, and save tens-of-thousands of our citizens as we did when we protected them in their automobiles. And just as importantly reduce the profits available to the criminal and terrorist networks.

I will close with a few final thoughts. The first is that we must keep the pressure on the cartels and destroy their crops before they are harvested, destroy their production facilities wherever they are, and break up the networks by arrest and prosecution. We must also combine these often times kinetic efforts with locating the financial institutions that knowingly or unknowingly support the financial aspect of drug trafficking—and seize their billions. Second, I want to highlight the efforts of my very good friend Mike Botticelli, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, who quite rightly tells us that with addiction we are really dealing with a disease and we should be focused on saving and rehabilitating those unfortunate to suffer the disease, and not just jailing them even for petty crimes. At the same time we must understand

that the overwhelming number of men and women involved in the production, transport, and distribution of these drugs are in it for the money and must be hunted down. We must also acknowledge that regardless of the disease, if serious crimes are committed we cannot turn a blind eye to the act just because the perpetrator is sick. But even while holding him or her accountable, and while punishing them, we should as a society still try to them well. Thirdly, we must develop a national campaign that appeals to the intelligence, or the good nature, or the love of humanity, or paranoia, or social responsibility, or pocket book, or fear of persecution, or whatever—it does not matter—so long as we have an effective program that significantly reduces demand. There are individual efforts out there in American society but they are uncoordinated and go unheralded. The Boy Scouts, the Young Marine Program, Drug Free America Foundation, and dozens of other efforts in our communities but they are individual points of light when what we need are floodlights.

Of note I want to alert the Committee to a combined effort by the Director of the FBI, Jim Comey, and the DEA Administrator, Chuck Rosenberg. The effort, entitled, “Chasing the Dragon,” is one that seeks to distribute a CD and study guide to 100,000 grade school, middle school, and high school teachers “...to reach youth before an addiction can set in.” The CD is powerful, horrifying, sad, disgusting, depressing, scary, and designed to get some of the most powerful influencers in our society—teachers—onboard in an effort to ideally prevent, and if not then to reduce drug use where it typically begins. Both organizations are also offering additional resources, experts, speakers, anything to help reduce the demand of drugs and the human tragedy it causes in the lives of millions. I would strongly encourage the Committee to bring in representatives of the two premier drug fighting organizations in the world and get their

perspective on this critically important topic. I would also encourage all to sign onto the FBI website at www.FBI.gov/ChasingtheDragon for additional details and perspective.

You might ask yourself, Mr. Chairman, “why is law enforcement and the U.S. military not only into the business of detecting, monitoring, and interdicting the networks and organizations that carry drugs and so many other illicit cargoes into the United States, but increasingly into drug abuse prevention and demand reduction as well”? Many argue it is not our job, although the nation could take a lesson as to how law and enforcement and the nation’s Armed Forces have all but set drug free environments within the two organizations. Is it not prevention and demand reduction the responsibility of our parents? Elected officials? Government health care providers? But I would submit that when the kind of men and women that serve in law enforcement, who see firsthand and everyday what drugs do to our children, our families, our society and to the nation, when these kind of men and women see what it does and that the effort to do something about it is too weak or non-existent—they act. I would agree that it might not be their job, but since no one else seems to be doing it as effectively as it could be done....