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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES CONGRESS TO CLOSE DEADLY FENTANYL LOOPHOLE**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and a bipartisan group of 51 other attorneys general called on Congress today to help end the opioid epidemic and close a loophole that allows people who traffic deadly fentanyl to stay a step ahead of law enforcement.

Madigan and the other attorneys general today [sent a letter to Congress](#) in support of S. 1553 and H.R. 4922, the Stopping Overdoses of Fentanyl Analogues (SOFA) Act. The SOFA Act will enable the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to more closely monitor fentanyl and variations of fentanyl, which can be added to heroin and be deadly. Madigan and the other attorneys general said in their letter that overdose deaths related to fentanyl now surpass overdoses related to heroin.

“In Illinois and around the country, people are struggling with opioid addiction with horrible consequences,” Madigan said. “We must strengthen our laws to enable law enforcement to stay ahead of drug traffickers and dealers who are bringing deadly fentanyl into communities.”

The DEA classifies drugs and certain chemicals that can be used to make drugs into five “schedules” based on use and the potential for dependency. Fentanyl is currently classified as a schedule II controlled substance, which means it has a high potential for abuse and dependence. When used as prescribed by a doctor, fentanyl can be a safe painkiller. However, without close physician supervision, fentanyl and illegally manufactured analogues, which are drugs designed to mimic the effects of fentanyl, can be lethal.

If passed by the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, the SOFA Act would eliminate the current loophole that keeps the controlled substance scheduling system one step behind individuals who manufacture fentanyl analogues and then introduce those powders into the opioid supply. The SOFA Act utilizes catch-all language which will allow the DEA to proactively schedule all newly modified fentanyl analogues before they cause fatalities by making fentanyl analogues illegal as soon as they are manufactured.

Joining Madigan in sending the letter were the other attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

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