

## United States Senate

SENATE CAUCUS ON  
INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL  
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 818-C  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 1, 2022

### VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Dr. Rahul Gupta  
Director  
White House Office of National Drug Control Policy  
1800 G St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Director Gupta:

Thank you for your letter dated January 28, 2022, noting your intention to deliver the 2022 *National Drug Control Strategy* (henceforth referred to as the *Strategy*)<sup>1</sup> by June 30, 2022, rather than the statutorily required date of February 7, 2022.<sup>2</sup> In your letter, you cited the “enormity of the drug overdose epidemic and the need for a coordinated Federal response” as the reason for the delay.<sup>3</sup> We are pleased that your office is taking a thoughtful look and share your sentiments, especially in light of the record overdose deaths.<sup>4</sup>

Despite this, we are disappointed in the delay. The *Strategy* is critical in informing the federal government’s approach to drug enforcement, prevention, and treatment. Now more than ever, a timely and whole-of-government *Strategy* is necessary.

Your letter noted that you have – and will – consult with members of Congress in developing the *Strategy*. We urge you to incorporate the input that we provided to ONDCP last year.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, to Charles Schumer et. al., Majority Leader, United States Senate (Jan. 28, 2022) (on file with author).

<sup>2</sup> 21 U.S.C. §1705(a)(2).

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, to Charles Schumer, et. al., Majority Leader, United States Senate (Jan. 28, 2022),

<sup>4</sup> CDC, *12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths*, VITAL STATISTICS RAPID RELEASE PROVISIONAL DRUG OVERDOSE DEATH COUNTS (Jan. 2, 2022), <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Letter from Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, to Ms. Regina LaBelle, Acting Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy (July 8, 2021), available at: [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_ondcp\\_-\\_national\\_drug\\_control\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_ondcp_-_national_drug_control_strategy.pdf). See, e.g., Letter from Sheldon Whitehouse, Chairman, Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, to Acting Director Regina LaBelle, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (July 20, 2021) (on file with author)

As ONDCP continues to develop its *Strategy*, we request that your staff provide monthly briefings on what work you have accomplished as part of developing the 2022 *Strategy*; progress towards finalizing the *Strategy*; and updates on the anticipated completion and timeline for issuance of the *Strategy*.

Thank you for your time and for your continued engagement with us on such critical issues.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Co-Chairman



Sheldon Whitehouse  
Chairman