

CALVIN H. HAYDEN  
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## **Testimony in Support of SB238 to the Senate Judiciary Committee February 15, 2023**

Chairman Warren, Vice Chair Wilborn, Ranking Minority Corson, and members of the committee:

Fentanyl is the drug we are encountering more than any other drug. It is a powerful illicit drug. It is fifty times stronger than heroin and around one hundred times stronger than morphine.

According to one study there are four reasons for the increase in fentanyl's increase in popularity:

- It has more bang for the buck.
- Some users have no idea they are getting fentanyl thinking it is "Oxy" or some other prescription drug.
- It is cheap to make.
- It is a response or reaction to the tighter controls on legitimate opioids.

Fentanyl is usually found in counterfeit pills made to resemble legitimate prescription drugs. It can also be cut into other drugs, including marijuana. The amount of fentanyl in a counterfeit pill or cut into another drug is not controlled. Some pills may not have any fentanyl in them, while others may have a lethal dose. The same applies to drugs that are cut with fentanyl.

The Johnson County Coroner told the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners in December of last year that eighty-six deaths were attributed to the drug in 2021. Two years earlier the total was thirty-four.

Our Joint Drug Task Force is encounter fentanyl on a regular basis. It is common for children to be around the area where the pill or cutting operation is located according to reports.

Fentanyl pills are being made in bright colors that attract minors. These kids are being told that the pill is something less harmful with tragic results.

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This bill would provide a response to the spike in the use of fentanyl by incarcerating those that provide the drug. They cannot produce it if they are in prison.

We would ask the committee to report the bill out as favorable for passage.

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