

TOM EMMER
6TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA
HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP
COMMITTEES
FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIGITAL ASSETS,
FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY AND INCLUSION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2306

March 1, 2024

464 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2331

DISTRICT OFFICE
9201 QUADAY AVENUE NE
SUITE 206
OTSEGO, MN 55330
(763) 241-6848

1107 HAZELTINE BOULEVARD
SUITE 476
CHASKA, MN 55318
(952) 262-2999

Shannon Kelly
Director of National Drug Control Policy
White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
750 17th ST NW
Washington D.C. 200006

Dear Director Kelly,

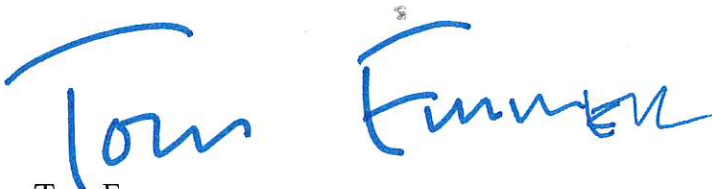
I am writing to voice my support for the application of Stearns County to be included in the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program. Being a regional hub and located in Central Minnesota, Stearns County continues to be negatively impacted by drug abuse.

The overdose crisis has evolved and is now largely characterized by deaths involving illicitly manufactured synthetic opioids, including fentanyl and, increasingly, stimulants. St. Cloud continues to see a rising volume of fentanyl pills and heroin. In 2023, Stearns County saw 131 non-fatal overdoses, and 23 fatal overdoses. Tragically, Stearns County had both a 14-year-old and a 14-month-old die from overdose of fentanyl in the past 6 months, leaving our law enforcement and the community worried about the overdose crisis.

Given the rise in overdoses and deaths from drugs in St. Cloud and Central Minnesota, it is evident that more resources are needed to combat drug abuse. HIDTA designation will strengthen Stearns County's ability to address these drug trafficking organizations traveling through and establishing operations in the County. The relationship with our local, state, and federal partners is an essential piece within the collaborative and proactive approach of these agencies.

Stearns county must receive the designation of a HIDTA, so they can save lives, reduce risks, and remove barriers to effective interventions. I respectfully request that you give Stearns County's application your full and fair consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance as you make your determination.

Sincerely,



Tom Emmer
Member of Congress