

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

March 2, 2023

Dear Director Gupta,

I once again write in strong support of the request submitted by Sullivan County's Drug Task Force to the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy to designate Sullivan County as a High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) within the High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area of New York and New Jersey (NY/NJ HIDTA).

Following our conversation last year, Sullivan County continues to have the highest per capita fatal drug overdose rate in New York State. Disturbingly, according to New York's [most recent county-level opioid data](#), in 2021, the opioid overdose death rate in Sullivan County was 108% higher than the state average. For the year 2022 and during the first week of 2023, [Sullivan County's Drug Task Force reported](#) 215 overdoses, 25 fatalities, and 140 incidences of Narcan being used on a call.

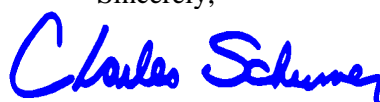
Sullivan County and its major transportation routes, including Route 17, also have a well-documented history of drug-related arrests. Just four days into 2023, for example, [Sullivan County conducted its first major drug bust of the year seizing eight ounces of crack cocaine and six grams of fentanyl](#). While Sullivan County's law enforcement agencies, including the Sullivan County District Attorney's Office and the Sullivan County Opioid Epidemic Task Force, have committed significant resources to respond to the drug trafficking problem throughout Sullivan County and the entire region, they continue to report a dire need for additional resources to combat the trafficking of heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, and methamphetamines, making Sullivan's inclusion in the NY/NJ HIDTA critical.

As I stressed during our last conversation, Sullivan is the only county in the entire Hudson Valley region without a HIDTA designation. Last year, I visited Monticello, New York, to personally meet with the dedicated members of Sullivan County's Drug Task Force. I can confidently say that their initiatives would be greatly aided by this designation as a HIDTA county, unlocking critical access to real-time data, guiding operations, and planning for resource deployment to provide immediate assistance during critical incidents of drug-related activity and violence.

For these reasons and many more, I continue to strongly support Sullivan County's inclusion in the NY/NJ HIDTA. Not only will this greatly benefit federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies through intelligence sharing and increased coordination, but it will also save lives in a county that has seen far too many loved ones lost to opioids and addiction.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator