



FILED Superior Court of California
County of Butte
SEP 12 2022
By: Sharif Elhallaq Clerk
Deputy

August 18, 2022

Honorable Corie J. Caraway, Judge of the Superior Court
Superior Court of California, County of Butte
One Court Street
Oroville, CA 95965

RE: BINTF COMMANDER AND BOARD RESPONSE TO 2021-2022 GRAND JURY REPORT

Dear Judge Caraway:

As the Commander and Board Chair for the Butte Interagency Narcotics Task Force (BINTF), we want to thank you and the members of the 2021-2022 Grand Jury for the important role that each of you play in ensuring the efficient and ethical function of local government for the betterment of Butte County.

The members of BINTF and our Board are committed to providing the highest level of service as it relates to our mission of protecting the public from the dangers of controlled substances. On behalf of BINTF, we want to extend our appreciation to the members of the Grand Jury for helping to ensure we maintain that commitment to all our citizens of Butte County.

GRAND JURY FINDINGS

The BINTF Commander and Board were asked to respond to the Grand Jury Findings referenced as F1-F4. The following represents that response:

F1. According to statistics provided by BINTF, deaths in Butte County due to overdose from Fentanyl and methamphetamine have been on a steady increase.

The Respondents agree with the finding. Fentanyl related overdose deaths quadrupled in 2021 in comparison with 2020. Methamphetamine related overdose deaths increased over 600% in 2021 in comparison with 2019. These statistics are consistent with both state and national trends.

F2. According to statistics provided by BINTF, 16-20 and university age groups in Butte County are being targeted by aggressive cartel marketing.

The Respondents agree with the finding. Drug Trafficking Organizations market fentanyl to all demographics, including a younger demographic, by producing fentanyl in colored powders and pills that make it appear innocuous and visually appealing.

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- F3. There is a strong relationship between illegal drug use and child endangerment, with an impact on foster care.

The Respondents agree with the finding. The statistics and real life examples point to the devastating impacts substance abuse imposes on families, especially children. The Drug Endangered Children program (DEC), instituted first in Butte County decades ago, remains a critical function of BINTF. DEC provides a "safety net" for those children found in dangerous environments by BINTF Agents in the course of their investigations.

- F4. The use of Narcan by EMS responders and the public has reduced the number of overdose deaths due to illegal drugs.

The Respondents agree with the finding. The true number of individuals saved from overdose related death due to the administration of Naloxone (Narcan) is likely vastly under reported, based on anecdotal evidence from the general public alone. It should also be noted that a methamphetamine specific overdose medication does not currently exist for either first responders or the general public.

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

The BINTF Commander and Board was asked to respond to the Grand Jury Recommendations R1 and R2. The following represents that response:

- R1 BINTF budget to include more resources for outreach and education to combat aggressive marketing techniques being used by controlled substance providers by July 1, 2023.

The Respondents agree with the recommendation identifying the need for more outreach and education to the public to combat the aggressive marketing techniques of Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO's). The COVID-19 pandemic essentially eliminated most requests for public presentations by BINTF. Despite these limitations, BINTF has continued to inform the public through a variety of forums, to include: Providing two virtual presentations to the Butte/Glenn Opioid Safety Coalition within the past year; Public release of the 2021 BINTF Annual Report, which highlighted the dangerous trend of aggressive marketing techniques by DTO's, specifically relating to Fentanyl; Public release of comprehensive Illicit Drug Overdose statistics for Butte County; Media releases regarding significant investigations into the trafficking of these dangerous substances.

BINTF will also ensure a comprehensive effort is made, to include collaboration with the Butte County Office of Education and our local school districts, to provide education and outreach to all demographics, regarding the dangers of Fentanyl and other dangerous substances. With the recent designation of Butte County as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), additional resources, including funding, will likely be available to increase the outreach and educational efforts of BINTF.

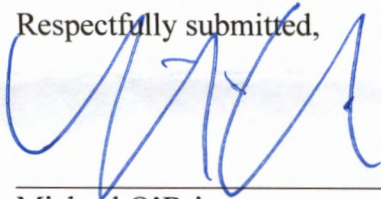
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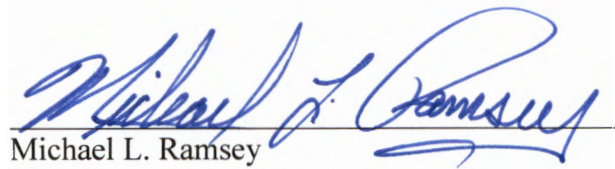
- R2. BINTF implement methods to educate the public regarding the effectiveness of Narcan by July 1, 2023.

The Respondents agree with the recommendation to implement methods to educate the public regarding the effectiveness of Naloxone (Narcan). Those efforts have already begun. A press conference held by the Chico Police Department in December of last year highlighted the use of Naloxone by a Chico Police Officer on a person suffering from a severe opioid overdose. In addition, the BINTF Commander was able to speak both to the dangers of fentanyl and the value of Naloxone due to those dangers. Opportunities such as these will continue to be sought by BINTF.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael O'Brien
BINTF Commander



Michael L. Ramsey
Butte County District Attorney
BINTF Board Chair - 2022

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