

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The flow of illicit drugs into the United States has caused a horrific public health crisis that must be addressed. Stemming that flow is an essential mission that has no military solution. Congress has authorized the executive to interdict and prosecute drug trafficking, including military support for such law enforcement-led interdiction efforts. At the same time, interdiction must be paired with serious efforts to reduce demand.

You have recently ordered four lethal military strikes on boats in the Caribbean Sea, based on determinations that they were affiliated with entities you have designated as drug trafficking organizations and trafficking narcotics. Congress has the sole constitutional responsibility to declare war and to authorize the use of force. You have failed to secure such authorization for these strikes. Further, the Administration's severe lack of transparency and failure to share critical information with Congress prevents Congress from conducting constitutionally ordained oversight of the Executive Branch.

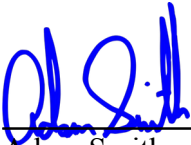
Per your Administration's sparse reporting to Congress, you have determined that certain cartels are "non-state armed groups," that you have "designated them as terrorist organizations," and that you have "determined that their actions constitute an armed attack against the United States."

However, your Administration has not identified any of the specific organizations you have determined to be included as designated terrorist organizations, nor the criteria or process used for making such determinations. You have also failed to specify the authority under which the Administration is able to designate affiliates of certain drug trafficking organizations as enemy combatants for the purpose of undertaking lethal strikes. We request that you immediately provide a list of all designated terrorist organizations to Congress, along with the associated determination criteria or methodologies used. In addition, you have not provided Congress with details regarding the intelligence associated with these strikes.

Finally, the Administration has not provided significant details with respect to the legal justification for these strikes beyond vague assertions of Article II powers. The President's Article II powers are significant, but they are not limitless. It is our understanding that the Department of Defense has determined strikes against designated terrorist organizations are legal on the basis of a legal opinion produced by the Department of Justice. We ask that you provide that legal opinion to Congress immediately.

We look forward to receiving the list of designated terrorist organizations and the Department of Justice legal opinion. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

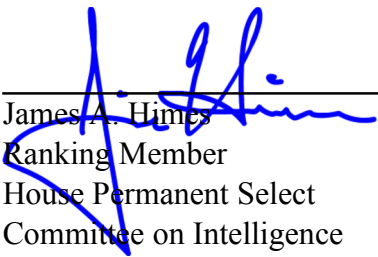
Sincerely,



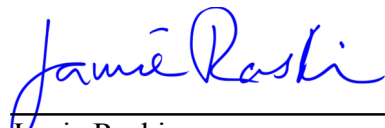
Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services
Committee



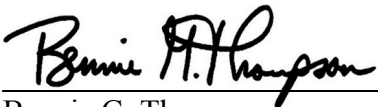
Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign
Affairs



James A. Himes
Ranking Member
House Permanent Select
Committee on Intelligence



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
House Committee on the
Judiciary



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee
on Homeland Security