

U.S. Rep. Gallagher, Sen. Cotton: Introduce Bill Imposing Sanctions on Drug Cartels

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WASHINGTON, D.C.— Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today introduced the Significant Transnational Criminal Organization Designation Act, legislation that would subject certain foreign criminal organizations, like drug cartels, to sanctions, including immigration, financial, and criminal penalties. The process would be similar to the system used for designating entities as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs). Senator Tom Cotton (R-AR) introduced companion legislation in the U.S. Senate alongside Sens. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Josh Hawley (R-MO), and Ben Sasse (R-NE).

“Mexican cartels wreak havoc on our border and pose a direct threat to our national security. It’s past time we give the federal government every tool it needs to go after these thugs,” said Rep. Gallagher. “From crippling sanctions to visa restrictions, this bill equips the administration to ensure these criminal organizations face severe consequences for their illicit activities.”

“Criminal organizations and drug cartels that terrorize our communities and wage war at our borders ought to be treated just like terrorist groups in the eyes of the U.S. government. This bill would help stop cartel violence by ensuring these groups-and anyone who helps them-face dire consequences for their actions,” said Sen. Cotton.

“Criminal organizations like MS-13 terrorize American communities through human trafficking and by smuggling drugs across our southern border. This legislation will make it easier for federal officials to crack down on these transnational criminal groups,” said Sen. Blackburn.

“America has a duty to keep its citizens safe from brutal cartel violence. This bill gives law enforcement a critical new tool to ensure that cross-border criminals cannot terrorize our citizens,” said Sen. Hawley.

“Drug cartels along our southern border have been a problem for far too long. We need a way to keep these thugs in check, and this legislation would allow our federal law enforcement to do just that. These cartels are murderous organizations that have blurred the line between drug trafficking and terrorism, and this designation would allow us to label them for what they are,” said Sen. Sasse.

Background:

The Significant Transnational Criminal Organization Designation Act enables the federal government to impose on the most significant Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) the same sanctions that apply to FTOs including:

- Barring organization members and their immediate families from admission to the United States.
- Freezing assets.
- Seeking civil and criminal penalties against Individuals providing material assistance or resources to the organization.

Text of the legislation may be found [HERE](#).