

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Introduces bills to impose maximum pressure campaign on cartels

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WASHINGTON, D.C.- [As first reported by Fox News](#), Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today introduced three bills that would combat escalating cartel violence in Mexico by sanctioning Mexican drug cartels, cracking down on arms smuggling, and combatting corruption and instability in Mexico.

“Recent cartel-related violence underscores the need for the U.S. to impose a maximum pressure campaign against cartels and the corrupt officials who help these criminals wreak havoc on the border,” **said Rep. Gallagher.** *“From crippling sanctions and visa restrictions to more resources to combat arms trafficking, these bills will give the federal government every tool it needs to go after cartels.”*

The three bills included in the package Rep. Gallagher introduced are:

- **Significant Transnational Criminal Organization Designation Act**
 - This bill 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).
- **Illicit Arms Trafficking Security Enforcement Act**
 - This bill would establish a Border Enforcement Security Team (BEST) within the Department of Homeland Security to focus solely on the reduction of arms trafficking. Of the current 69 BESTs, none are solely dedicated to arms trafficking.
 - The purposes of the team would be to: reduce arms smuggling of weapons,

weapon parts, munitions, explosives, and related items; apprehend arms smugglers; ensure coordination with ATF for data tracking of seized firearms through eTrace; deconflict arms trafficking investigations between DHS and DOJ.

- This would ensure arms trafficking in and out of the country was better monitored and at a minimum would help ensure American companies aren't unwittingly supplying cartels with weapons.
- **Supporting Mexico Against Corruption (SMAC) Act**
- This bill would combat corruption by requiring the President to impose Magnitsky Sanctions on individuals in the Mexican government that the U.S. Treasury Department has "credible evidence" engaged in corrupt activities outlined by the Global Magnitsky Act. Under the SMAC Act, the President would have 120 days to implement these sanctions.
- The Treasury Department has sanctioned shockingly few Mexican government officials for corruption and human rights abuses under the Magnitsky Act since the act was passed in 2016. This would require the President to sanction anyone who meets the standards under the Magnitsky Act to help deter officials from aiding cartels.

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