

United States Senate

February 8, 2022

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
JUDICIARY
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

I write to express my grave concerns regarding the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) recent announcement to distribute nearly \$30 million in "harm reduction grants" through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).¹ President Biden pushed through \$6 trillion in funding under the guise of COVID relief, yet less than ten cents of every dollar went to fighting the virus.²

It is my understanding that through this program funds may be used for, "harm reduction vending machine(s)" which could be stocked with, among other things, "safe smoking kits/supplies."³ It has been reported that an HHS spokesman confirmed, "that these kits will provide pipes for users to smoke crack cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, and 'any illicit substance.'"⁴ Government-funded drug paraphernalia is a slap in the face to the communities and first responders fighting against drugs flowing into our country from a wide-open southern border. If this is the President's plan to address drug abuse, our nation is in serious trouble.

The administration should be providing resources to entities that prevent drug abuse and to those that can prevent harm without providing drug paraphernalia. With this mind, please provide answers to the following questions by March 1, 2022.

- 1) U. S. Code Title 21 Section 863, makes it "unlawful for any person to sell or offer for sale drug paraphernalia; to use the mails or any other facility of interstate commerce to transport drug paraphernalia; or to import or export drug paraphernalia." Is the administration authorizing the distribution of pipes for individuals to smoke crack cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, and any other illicit substances?
- 2) Please provide a list of entities that applied for this grant program; and explain the requirements for entities to be eligible for this grant program.

Sincerely,



¹ <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/sp-22-001>

² <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/biden-team-5-trillion-covid-relief-more-liz-peek>

³ <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/grants/pdf/fy22-harm-reduction-nofo.pdf>

⁴ <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/biden-admin-to-fund-crack-pipe-distribution-to-advance-racial-equity/>