FACT-CHECKING ORGANIZATIONS WRONG ABOUT SOURCE OF DRUGS CROSSING THE BORDER, A NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION IS APPROPRIATE

By the Defending Conservatism Institute
Published February 17, 2019

Summary: A number of left-leaning fact-checking organizations have been falsely and consistently claiming that Trump is wrong about how drugs enter the country. They claim that drugs enter primarily through ports of entry, they do not, per data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection. A national emergency declaration is needed to stop the national drug overdose epidemic.

Trump is actually correct that most drugs are illegally smuggled in between ports of entry, not at them, consisting primarily of marijuana, and the fact-checkers are all wrong per data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection. It is about time that Trump declared a national emergency (although the wisdom of waiting to issue one until passing a bill that gives Democrats whatever funding they want is questionable to say the least). Had he implemented the judicial reforms restricting court jurisdiction the Defending Conservatism Institute recommended last year, he wouldn't run the risk now of the courts declaring the executive order unconstitutional.

With that being said, a national emergency is needed, contrary to the claims of liberals like those at CNN. Tens of thousands are dying from drug overdose each year. Liberal 'factcheckers' have dishonestly claimed that most drug seizures are made at legal checkpoints/ports of entry, not by border patrol (e.g. PolitiFact, FactCheck.org, USA Today, TIME, AP, ABC News, Washington

Post). CNN, to its credit, has observed that marijuana is the notable exception, but neglected to provide key context revealing that since Marijuana accounts for the vast majority of drugs crossing the border, most drugs are indeed smuggled between checkpoints, not at them. The Washington Post Fact Checker was also more careful with its wording in this article by observing that marijuana is an exception (see Note at bottom).

Percentage of Drugs Seized by Border Patrol, By Year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Cocaine	21.18%	10.73%	9.93%	22.73%	9.39%	13.04%	11.81%
Heroin	10.21%	12.61%	12.32%	8.56%	11.82%	19.54%	9.95%
Marijuana	81.48%	83.79%	81.45%	71.85%	71.52%	70.43%	60.83%
Methamphetamine	20.82%	14.72%	14.47%	18.18%	17.91%	16.96%	13.37%
Fentanyl					0.00%	13.14%	19.66%

Source: CBP Enforcement Statistics FY2018, Drug Seizures. U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Drugs Seized by Border Patrol as a Percentage of All Drugs Seized by CBP, By Year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Cocaine	0.42%	0.16%	0.19%	0.50%	0.29%	0.69%	0.75%
Heroin	0.01%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.03%	0.07%	0.06%
Marijuana	79.25%	81.75%	78.84%	68.92%	67.44%	63.25%	51.01%
Methamphetamine	0.13%	0.12%	0.16%	0.29%	0.43%	0.76%	1.20%
Fentanyl					0.00%	0.01%	0.04%

Source: CBP Enforcement Statistics FY2018, Drug Seizures. U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

What all of the so-called factcheckers neglected to mention is that marijuana seized by border patrol primarily accounts for all of the illegal drugs entering the United States in terms of sheer quantity. In 2018, marijuana seized by border patrol (i.e. between checkpoints, not at them) accounted for 51.01% of all drugs seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protections. In 2017 marijuana seizures accounted for 63.25% of all drugs seized. Previous years of 2016-12 were 67.44%, 68.92%, 78.84%, 81.75%, and 79.25% respectively. In other words, for each of the last 7 years for which CBP provides data, marijuana seizures alone are the primary source of drugs seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and those seizures are made, not at legal ports of entry, but in the unsecured areas where a wall is needed. (Source: CBP)

Office of Field Operations Drug Seizures (to August 31, 2018)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018TD
Cocaine	45,260	39,075	41,312	38,145	52,803	62,331	47,945
Heroin	3,780	3,990	4,314	5,530	4,224	3,925	4,813
Marijuana	522,614	469,995	437,950	602,795	515,381	361,564	283,084
Methamphetamine	14,131	20,739	23,234	29,001	37,703	50,569	67,292
Fentanyl	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	440	1,196	** 1,357

*weights are in pounds (lb)

** Fentanyl statistics reflected here are through July 31. August totals will be provided next month.

U.S. Border Patrol Drug Seizures (to August 31, 2018)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018TD
Cocaine	12,161	4,696	4,554	11,220	5,473	9,346	6,423
Heroin	430	576	606	518	566	953	532
Marijuana	2,299,864	2,430,123	1,922,545	1,538,307	1,294,052	861,231	439,531
Methamphetamine	3,715	3,580	3,930	6,443	8,224	10,328	10,382
Fentanyl	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	181	332

*weights are in pounds (lb)

See the **U.S. Border Patrol Nationwide Checkpoint Drug Seizures in Pounds** webpage for a monthly breakdown of drug seizures at U.S. Border Patrol checkpoints.

So yes, there is justification for declaring a national emergency. When you look at all the other cases of national emergencies declared over things like H1N1 swine flu which were far less important (Obama declared 12 national emergencies, George W. Bush declared 13, and Bill Clinton declared 17) while the media said not a peep, it's clear that opposition to this national emergency is entirely hypocritical on the part of the left. The U.S. still remains under 31 states of declared national emergency, many of which are clearly less dire than border security, including:

- 2015 National Emergency blocking property of people in Burundi related to a failed coup.
- 2014 National Emergency blocking property of people in the Central African Republican related to humanitarian aid workers.
- 2014 National Emergency blocking property of people in South Sudan relating to the ongoing civil war.
- 2012 National Emergency blocking property of people in Yemen who were causing unrest.

Actually, the above cases enacted by the Obama administration involve the blocking of financial assets for individuals without due process in blatant violation of the 5th and 14th Amendments. There is a strong argument for declaring them unconstitutional, whereas border security to actually protect our national sovereignty from drug trafficking, weapons trafficking, sex trafficking, and terrorist infiltration by using a physical barrier on the southern border with its notoriously porous gaps, is considerably more defensible.

$5.7 billion for a border wall is by the way entirely reasonable in the context of a $4.41 billion U.S. Budget, and is roughly 1/9th of 1% of the Budget. Had Trump pursued it in conjunction with reasonable immigration reform measures (e.g. an apology for the Mexican Repatriation and/or citizenship for military veterans/those with native American blood of U.S. tribes/long-time visa holders) instead of demonizing hard-working immigrants, he probably wouldn't have engendered the kind of opposition he did.

NOTE-Of all the fact-checkers, CNN and the Washington Post Fact Checker appear to be the only ones who realizes that marijuana is the lone exception, all of the other so-called fact-checkers are just parroting CNN and the Washington Post (as opposed to actually checking the facts for themselves like they're supposed to). That is why CNN repeatedly attempts to sneakily refer, instead of drugs, to "hard narcotics," meaning all drugs except marijuana (typically the only drug included in soft narcotics). However, in doing so CNN is trying to falsely portray Trump as incorrect, since Trump does not say "hard narcotics" just "drugs." Thus while CNN is 'technically' correct they are distorting the facts.

CNN and the Washington Post Fact Checker are more careful with their wording because they recognize that marijuana does arrive primarily between ports of entry. However, in omitting mention of the fact that in terms of quantity most drugs do enter between ports of entry since marijuana is the primary drug

entering, they are withholding key information. Their interpretation, I'm sure, would be that "most drugs" entering the U.S. should mean "most TYPES of drugs" as opposed to "most drugs in terms of overall quantity," since most TYPES do enter at ports of entry (fentanyl, methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin). However, the more common and reasonable interpretation by quantity would make Trump correct, so they choose the alternative, and simply neglect to mention the key facts that would justify Trump's claim.

Needless to say, such partisan pettiness in withholding key data hardly speaks well for fact-checking media organizations, who should honestly mention key information like this.

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Defending Conservatism Media Contact:

Joshua David Zambrano/ JoshuaZ84@gmail.com/202-981-1689