

May 19, 2021

To: Common Council Alders

From: Paul Mozina

Re: Vote NO CC File 201585 – Resolution relative to acceptance and funding of the 2021 High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area project awards

Thank you Chairman and Committee members.

Lt. Hutchinson described the nexus of guns, drugs and money in his testimony (to the PS&H Committee) but he failed to mention that it is drug prohibition aka, the War on Drugs, that creates this nexus. For 50 years now, the government has tried and failed to alter human nature and the law of supply and demand by creating crimes against consensual activity that arbitrarily criminalize the production, distribution and consumption of certain substances.

The amounts of drugs confiscated by the Milwaukee HIDTA in 2020 are staggering: 298 kilos of cocaine. Really? Apparently, it's simply a matter of sending it through the mail. Is the answer then to inspect every single package shipped in the United States? Despite the impressive amounts seized, was there any shortage of controlled substances in the city? Did the number of overdose deaths decline? Did the number of drug related homicides and non-fatal shooting go down? Lt. Hutchinson affirmed what has always been obvious: that many of the homicides and non-fatal shootings in the City are drug war related.

Hope was missing from Lt. Hutchinson's presentation. HIDTA's strategy – if you want to call it that – is to continue executing the same old futile attempt to disrupt and dismantle drug trafficking organizations. At a Milwaukee City-County Heroin, Opioid and Cocaine Task Force meeting in 2018, Alderman Murphy asked then MPD Captain Alex Ramirez, who was in charge of HIDTA at the time, how MPD was going to stop the importation of fentanyl, he responded: "We go after them". This is like riding a merry-go-round and hoping to catch the horse in front of you. It's time to stop playing this game and look for real solutions.

50 years of drug war prohibition has created enormous problems in society and our city. It is a policy rooted in the lie that some people, calling themselves "the government", have somehow legitimately acquired the right to coercively and violently control what people choose to inoffensively possess and consume. But people cannot legitimately delegate rights to a government that none of them possesses. Alas, over the years, government has become addicted to the notion that it can fundamentally alter human nature by making arbitrary laws that directly conflict with it.

The Common Council's addiction to using law enforcement to solve social problems goes back at least to 1995 when, in the wake of the 1994 "Crime Bill", the MPD went on a hiring spree increasing its members by 500 by 1997. This unprecedented expansion of the police force has not increased public safety and the corresponding pension obligations have the potential to bankrupt the city.

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This [grant](#) requires you to explicitly commit the taxpayers of this city to spending \$1.4 million in the 2022 budget to fund 12 MPD member's participation in 5 HIDTA Task Forces. Alderwoman Coggs has said 'you can't legislate morality', but that is exactly what you would be attempting to do by funding this grant. Please Alders, the War on Drugs is as immoral as slavery. It says the government owns your body and can dictate what you put in it. Don't commit the taxpayers of this city to funding HIDTA's failed Drug War. Don't make the 2022 Budget an Immoral Document.

Thank you for listening.