

20241020er

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2 A memorial to the United States Department of State
3 urging the United States Secretary of State to
4 designate drug cartels as Foreign Terrorist
5 Organizations.
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7 WHEREAS, the land and maritime borders of the United States
8 present unique challenges and threats to the national security
9 of the country, and

10 WHEREAS, drug cartels engage in illicit activities,
11 including human smuggling, human trafficking, weapons
12 trafficking, money laundering, drug smuggling, extortion, and
13 kidnapping, which activities have breached the borders of the
14 United States, and

15 WHEREAS, as an example of the heinous activities of the
16 drug cartels, in March 2023, south of the Texas border, one drug
17 cartel claimed responsibility for the armed abduction and
18 killing of American citizens who were traveling in Mexico, and

19 WHEREAS, drug cartels have been responsible for the export
20 and distribution to the United States of wholesale amounts of
21 fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and other illicit
22 substances, which has caused tens of thousands of drug-related
23 overdoses and deaths in this country, and

24 WHEREAS, during federal fiscal year 2023, United States
25 Customs and Border Protection seized 27,000 pounds of fentanyl
26 and millions of fentanyl pills, enough to kill every American
27 several times over, and this amount represents a mere 10 to 15
28 percent of the fentanyl actually sent across the border into the
29 United States each year, and

20241020er

30 WHEREAS, drug cartels engage in the practice of human
31 smuggling, which poses a substantial threat to the United States
32 by creating conduits that allow contraband and persons seeking
33 to harm the United States to clandestinely enter this country,
34 and

35 WHEREAS, during federal fiscal year 2023, United States
36 Customs and Border Protection encountered 172 individuals on the
37 terrorist watchlist, nearly double the previous year and more
38 than the past 6 years combined, and

39 WHEREAS, Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act
40 authorizes the United States Secretary of State, in consultation
41 with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, to
42 designate an organization as a Foreign Terrorist Organization
43 when certain criteria are met, and

44 WHEREAS, drug cartels meet the criteria to be designated as
45 Foreign Terrorist Organizations, given they are foreign in
46 nature, engage in or retain the capability and intent to engage
47 in terrorism, and threaten the security, foreign relations, and
48 the economic interests of the United States, NOW, THEREFORE,

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50 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

51
52 That the Florida Legislature respectfully urges the United
53 States Secretary of State to designate drug cartels as Foreign
54 Terrorist Organizations so that appropriate means may be
55 initiated to mitigate and, eventually, eliminate their
56 operations.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State dispatch
58 copies of this memorial to the President of the United States,

20241020er

59 the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
60 United States House of Representatives, the United States
61 Secretary of State, and each member of the Florida delegation to
62 the United States Congress.