



Mike Morrison | Sheriff

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Foreman and Johnson on Central Washington Fentanyl Task Force

Rep. Dan Newhouse of the 4th District launched the Central Washington Fentanyl Task Force, a vital initiative aimed at combating the escalating fentanyl crisis plaguing communities across Central Washington and the United States.

On the task force are two representatives from the Chelan County Sheriff's Office: Sgt. Chris Foreman is president of the Washington State Narcotics Investigators Association (WSNIA) and Ana Johnson is the manager of the Chelan County Behavioral Health Unit.

The 20-member task force is a working group led by Rep. Newhouse and consisting of groups and people on the local and state levels who are on the frontlines fighting the fentanyl crisis throughout Central Washington. Task force members include law enforcement, addiction treatment groups, medical professionals, drug court officials, school resource officers, tribal leaders, elected officials, and community leaders.

"Today, we take a bold step forward in our unwavering fight against the fentanyl crisis that has inflicted immeasurable pain on our families and friends in Central Washington and the United States," **said Rep. Newhouse**. "We cannot stand idly by while this deadly drug ravages our communities, claiming lives and tearing families apart. The Central Washington Fentanyl Task Force will be a powerful force for change, bringing together the best minds and resources to tackle the growing threat of fentanyl in our region. The devastating impact of the fentanyl crisis requires an all-hands-on-deck approach, and I thank all the dedicated groups and individuals who will join forces to combat this crisis. I am confident that this group will help protect and build a stronger Central Washington."

Along with Foreman and Johnson, the members of the task force are:

- **Kimberly Bershing, RN, BSN**, Chief Nursing Officer, MultiCare Yakima Memorial
- **Joseph Brusic**, Prosecuting Attorney, Yakima County
- **Jered Carter**, Clinical Supervisor, Sundown M Ranch & Substance Abuse
- **Judge David Elofson (Retired)**, Yakima County Superior Court
- **Jarred-Michael Erickson**, Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- **Chief Kevin Fuhr**, Moses Lake Police Department
- **Dr. Raul Garcia**, Medical Director, Astria Toppenish Hospital
- **Chief Chris Guerrero**, Kennewick Police Department
- **Detective Erik Horbatko**, Yakima Police Department
- **Chief Rob Layman**, Sunnyside Police Department
- **Amanda McKinney**, District 1 Commissioner, Yakima County

Undersheriff
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Chief of Operations
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- **Rep. Gina Mosbrucker**, Washington's 14th Legislative District
- **Sgt. Rafael Sanchez**, Yakima Police Department
- **Chief James Shike**, Yakama Nation Tribal Police
- **Alicia Stromme Tobin**, Executive Director, Safe Yakima Valley
- **Megan Tweedy**, Yakima Community Member
- **Sheriff Robert Udell**, Yakima County
- **Andrew Wonacott**, Yakima Community Member

“I applaud Congressman Newhouse for leading the fight in Washington state in regards to the Fentanyl epidemic. One life lost to Fentanyl abuse is too many,” Foreman said. “Our community and our children's future are in grave danger if we do not come together and work toward combating this poison from continuing to be pushed into our community. The way this Fentanyl is being marketed, distributed and mixed in with other drugs make no mistake, the cartels are targeting our youth and the next generation of our loved ones. I am excited to see what we can do with Federal Government support to fight against those that are bringing this into our homes and work diligently to hopefully solve this issue.”

The Central Washington Fentanyl Task Force will address the entire spectrum of issues tied to the fentanyl crisis, focusing on enforcement, education, prevention and treatment. The group will plan to meet on a quarterly basis. The goal of the group will be to research, discuss and execute well-informed initiatives that will do the following to address the fentanyl crisis in Central Washington:

- Compile data from federal, state, and local communities to be able to accurately assess trends in the fentanyl crisis.
- Assess current resources available to the public and frontline workers, and where potential shortcomings may exist.
- Discuss potential legislative action on the federal, state, and local levels.
- Help organizations and local leaders educate the public about the dangers of fentanyl and opportunities for treatment.

(This press release was provided by Rep. Newhouse's office.)

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