



# NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives  
Speaker Steve Montenegro (R-29)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Arizona House Sends Cartel Terror Designation Measure to Voters

*Ballot Measure Would Classify Cartels as Terrorist Organizations Under State Law*

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – Arizona voters will decide next year whether violent drug cartels operating across the southern border should be officially designated as terrorist organizations under state law. The Legislature has passed [House Concurrent Resolution 2055](#), sponsored by Speaker of the House Steve Montenegro, placing the measure on the 2026 general election ballot.

HCR2055 directs the state to recognize transnational cartels as terrorist organizations and authorizes the Arizona Department of Homeland Security to use all available tools to confront them. The resolution builds on House Republican efforts to address the rising threat of fentanyl, human trafficking, and violence flowing across the border into Arizona communities.

**“These cartels run brutal, organized operations that traffic women and children, flood our streets with fentanyl, and kill without consequence,”** said Speaker Montenegro. **“Arizona is on the frontlines of a war that Washington ignored until President Trump took action. This resolution gives the Trump Administration another tool to defend our state, uphold the rule of law, and protect innocent lives. By sending it to the ballot, we’re putting the decision where it belongs—with the people.”**

The Reality Arizona Faces:

- Cartel violence is escalating – Transnational criminal organizations control the flow of fentanyl, meth, and heroin across the southern border.
- Terrorist threats are increasing – From 2021 to 2023, U.S. Customs and Border Protection encountered 282 individuals on the terrorist watchlist attempting to cross the southwest border—a 3,033% increase over the previous three years.
- Fentanyl deaths are rising sharply – Seizures of the drug have nearly tripled, amounting to billions of lethal doses entering U.S. communities.

The measure advances a key priority of the [House Majority Plan](#), which focuses on public safety, border security, and defending Arizona families. Introduced by Republican leadership, the Majority Plan lays out a direct approach to law enforcement support and stopping cartel violence.

**“House Republicans are taking action to protect Arizona,”** Speaker Montenegro added. **“We trust voters to make their voices heard and stand with us in this fight.”**

*Steve Montenegro is the Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives and serves Legislative District 29 in the West Valley, Goodyear, and Surprise. Follow him on X at @SteveMontenegro.*

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