



# MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

## Supervisor Sylvia Ortiz-Velez - District 12

**FOR PLANNING PURPOSES:** June 28, 2021 at 10 a.m.

**Contact:** Rob Hullum, 414-278-4285

## Supervisor Ortiz-Velez Calls on State Legislature to Legalize Fentanyl Testing Strips

MILWAUKEE – County Supervisor Sylvia Ortiz-Velez will hold a press conference on Monday, June 28 at 10 a.m. outside of the Wells Street entrance of the Milwaukee County Courthouse to introduce legislation calling on the Wisconsin State Legislature to legalize fentanyl testing strips.

Supervisor Ortiz-Velez will be joined by [State Senator](#) Lena Taylor, [Team Havoc](#) and [MKE Heroin Diaries](#) Founder Rafael Mercado, [United Garden Homes](#) Vice President Desilynn Smith, [Addiction Policy Forum](#) Senior Director Michelle Jaskulski, and [God Touch Milwaukee](#) Executive Director Marty Calderon at the press conference.

Between 2014 and 2019 Milwaukee County had the highest per capita opioid death rate in Wisconsin according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. In a May 17, 2021 [CBS 58 news segment](#), Medical College of Wisconsin Professor Constance Kostelac, MD stated, “Three out of four overdose deaths involve fentanyl alone or in combination with other substances.”

The ability to test for the presence of fentanyl would allow individuals to determine the safety level of drugs prior to consumption, allowing for the prevention of accidental overdoses and lessening the impact of the opioid crisis.

Currently, it is illegal in Wisconsin to possess fentanyl testing strips, but draft legislation being introduced in the State Legislature would decriminalize their use and direct DHS to establish a program to distribute fentanyl testing strips to drug dependent individuals.

**WHO:** County Supervisor **Sylvia Ortiz-Velez**; State Senator **Lena Taylor**; Team Havoc and MKE Heroin Diaries Founder **Rafael Mercado**; United Garden Homes Vice President **Desilynn Smith**; Addiction Policy Forum Senior Director **Michelle Jaskulski**; God Touch Milwaukee Executive Director **Marty Calderon**.

**WHAT:** Introduction of resolution calling on the Wisconsin State Legislature to legalize fentanyl testing strips.

**WHEN:** Monday, June 28 at 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** Outside of Milwaukee County Courthouse (901 N 9th St, Milwaukee, WI 53233) Wells Street entrance by water fountain

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