

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 7970

To amend the Controlled Substances Act to permanently schedule 2-benzylbenzimidazole opioids (commonly referred to as nitazenes) as Schedule 1 controlled substances, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2026

Mr. LATTA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Controlled Substances Act to permanently schedule 2-benzylbenzimidazole opioids (commonly referred to as nitazenes) as Schedule 1 controlled substances, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Strengthening Tools
5 to Outlaw Poisonous Nitazenes Act” or the “STOP
6 Nitazenes Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CLASS I SCHEDULING OF NITAZENES.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(c) of the Controlled
3 Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)) is amended by adding
4 at the end of Schedule I the following:

5 “(f)(1) Unless specifically exempted or unless listed
6 in another schedule, any material, compound, mixture, or
7 preparation that contains—

8 “(A) any quantity of a 2-benzylbenzimidazole
9 opioid; or

10 “(B) the salts, isomers, and salts of isomers of
11 a 2-benzylbenzimidazole opioid.

12 “(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the term ‘2-
13 benzylbenzimidazole opioid’ includes the following:

14 “(A) A substance that is structurally related to
15 2-benzylbenzimidazole with the following modifica-
16 tions:

17 “(i) At the 1-position, substitution with an
18 alkyl linker connected to a substituted amine
19 group containing hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, or a
20 heteroaryl group, such as a morpholino,
21 pyrrolidino, or piperidinyl group, whether or not
22 further substituted.

23 “(ii) At the 2-position—

24 “(I) replacement of the alkyl portion
25 of the benzyl group with a substituted or

1 unsubstituted alkyl, alkoxy, carbamates
2 group, nitrogen, sulfur, or oxygen atom; or

3 “(II) replacement of the phenyl por-
4 tion of the benzyl group with an aryl or
5 heteroaryl group.

6 “(iii) Substitution on the phenyl portion of
7 the benzimidazole ring with a hydrogen atom,
8 halogen, nitro, cyano, substituted or
9 unsubstituted amide, amine, alkyl, alkoxy, aryl,
10 or heteroaryl group.

11 “(iv) At the 6-position, substitution with
12 hydrogen, nitro, trifluoromethyl, methoxy,
13 trifluoromethoxy, cyano, and halogen group.

14 “(B) A substance that exhibits agonist activity
15 at the mu-opioid receptor.

16 “(C) Etonitazene, clonitazene, metonitazene,
17 isotonitazene, protonitazene, butonitazene,
18 etodesnitazene, flunitazene, N-pyrrolidino
19 etonitazene, N-desethyl isotonitazene, and N-
20 piperidinyl etonitazene.

21 “(3) The Attorney General may by order publish in
22 the Federal Register a list of substances that satisfy the
23 definition of the term ‘2-benzyl benzimidazole opioid’ in
24 paragraph (2).”.

1 (b) REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY STATUS.—Any sub-
2 stance included in the amendment made by subsection (a)
3 that was temporarily scheduled under section 201(h) of
4 the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 811(h)) shall
5 be deemed permanently scheduled and subject to the re-
6 quirements of Schedule I of section 202(c) of that Act (21
7 U.S.C. 812(c)) as of the date of enactment of this Act.

8 **SEC. 3. RULEMAKING.**

9 (a) INTERIM FINAL RULE.—The Attorney General—
10 (1) shall, not later than 1 year after the date
11 of enactment of this Act, issue rules to implement
12 this Act, including the amendments made by this
13 Act; and

14 (2) may issue the rules under paragraph (1) as
15 an interim final rule.

16 (b) PROCEDURE FOR FINAL RULE.—

17 (1) EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERIM FINAL
18 RULES.—A rule issued by the Attorney General as
19 an interim final rule under subsection (a) shall be-
20 come immediately effective as an interim final rule
21 without requiring the Attorney General to dem-
22 onstrate good cause therefor, notwithstanding sub-
23 paragraph (B) of section 553(b) of title 5, United
24 States Code.

1 (2) OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT AND HEAR-
2 ING.—An interim final rule issued under subsection
3 (a) shall give interested persons the opportunity to
4 comment and to request a hearing.

5 (3) FINAL RULE.—After the conclusion of pro-
6 ceedings under paragraph (2), the Attorney General
7 shall issue a final rule to implement this Act, includ-
8 ing the amendments made by this Act, in accordance
9 with section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

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