

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5415

To amend the Controlled Substances Act to permanently schedule the class of benzimidazole-opioids known as nitazenes, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

Mr. VINDMAN (for himself and Mr. BAUMGARTNER) 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 the class of benzimidazole-opioids known as nitazenes, 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 “Nitazene Control Act
5 of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) 2-Benzylbenzimidazole opioids are a class of
2 synthetic opioids first synthesized in the 1950s.
3 They exhibit significant potency at the mu-opioid re-
4 ceptor, with some substances exceeding the potency
5 of fentanyl.

6 (2) The Drug Enforcement Administration
7 (DEA) has temporarily or permanently scheduled
8 multiple 2-benzylbenzimidazole opioid compounds
9 under Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act
10 due to their high abuse potential and lack of accept-
11 ed medical use.

12 (3) Nitazenes and related compounds have
13 emerged in the illicit drug supply as designer drugs
14 and contribute to overdose and fatal poisonings in
15 the United States.

16 (4) A class-wide permanent scheduling of 2-
17 benzylbenzimidazole opioids is necessary to preemp-
18 tively address the proliferation of new analogs,
19 streamline enforcement, and protect public health.

20 (5) The HALT Fentanyl Act created pathways
21 for research using Schedule I controlled substances
22 which apply to scheduled nitazenes.

1 **SEC. 3. SCHEDULE I CLASSIFICATION OF NITAZENES.**

2 (a) AMENDMENT.—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) 2-Benzylbenzimidazole opioids, commonly re-
6 ferred to as ‘nitazenes’, their isomers, esters, ethers, salts
7 and salts of isomers, esters, and ethers, including:

8 “(1) Is structurally related to 2-
9 benzylbenzimidazole with the following modifications:

10 “(A) At the 1-position, substitution with
11 an alkyl linker connected to a substituted amine
12 group containing hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, and/
13 or heteroaryl group (e.g. morphilino,
14 pyrrolidino, or piperidinyl groups), whether or
15 not further substituted.

16 “(B) At the 2-position:

17 “i. Replacement of the alkyl portion of the ben-
18 zyl group with a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl,
19 alkoxy, carbamates group, nitrogen, sulfur, and/or
20 oxygen atoms.

21 “ii. Replacement of the phenyl portion of the
22 benzyl group with an aryl or heteroaryl group.

23 “(C) Substitution on the phenyl portion of
24 the benzimidazole ring with a hydrogen atom,
25 halogen, nitro, cyano, substituted or

1 unsubstituted amide, amine, alkyl, alkoxy, aryl,
2 and/or heteroaryl groups.

3 “(D) At the 6-position, substitution with
4 hydrogen, nitro, trifluoromethyl, methoxy,
5 trifluoromethoxy, cyano, and halogen groups.;

6 and

7 “(2) Exhibits agonist activity at the mu-opioid
8 receptor.

9 Such substances include, but are not limited to:
10 etonitazene, clonitazene, metonitazene, isotonitazene,
11 protonitazene, butonitazene, etodesnitazene,
12 flunitazene, N-pyrrolidino etonitazene, N-desethyl
13 isotonitazene, and N-piperidinyl etonitazene.”.

14 (b) REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY STATUS.—Any sub-
15 stance included in the amendment to section 202(c) of the
16 Controlled Substances Act made by this section that was
17 temporarily scheduled under section 201(h) of the Con-
18 trolled Substances Act shall be deemed permanently
19 scheduled and subject to the requirements of Schedule I
20 as of the date of enactment of this Act.

21 (c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
22 tion or the amendments made by this section shall be con-
23 strued to authorize the initiation of new research using
24 substances described in the amendment made by sub-

- 1 section (a) without proper registration and scheduling
- 2 compliance.

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