

Bereaved Families Lead Approximately 9,000 Americans in over 100 Walk for Lives Events Nationwide to End Fentanyl

From major cities to rural towns, United Against Fentanyl highlights the national reach of a survivor-led movement demanding action on the fentanyl crisis

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This past Saturday, July 11, an estimated 9,000 people participated in [Walk for Lives](#) events across more than 100 cities and towns nationwide, marking the largest single day of grassroots fentanyl awareness in U.S. history. Organized by [United Against Fentanyl](#) (UAF), the walks were led by bereaved families and united survivors, nonprofit organizations, public health leaders, law enforcement, elected officials, and community members in cities, suburbs, and small towns from coast to coast.



Micah Sawyer carries photo of Micah Jr. in San Francisco Walk for Lives

This year's walk was in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Fentanyl Free America initiative, which joined to help expand the movement's reach into new communities nationwide. The partnership paired UAF's grassroots family-led organizing with DEA's national footprint. Last year, the inaugural walk brought 3,000 attendees, across 50 walks, in over 25 states.

“

What United Against Fentanyl and the Walk for Lives movement has done is brought us all together and given us opportunity to lock arms across the country and a megaphone for our voices to be heard.”

Rachel Phillips

This year's turnout underscores what UAF has argued since its founding: the fentanyl crisis is not confined to any one region, political affiliation, or income level, and neither is the movement to end it. By reaching more than 100 communities in a single coordinated day, Walk for Lives

demonstrated that grassroots organizing against fentanyl can scale nationally while remaining rooted in local, personal loss.

Among those marching was Rachel Phillips, co-leader of the Fort Worth Walk for Lives, who lost her brother, Thomas, to fentanyl. "For years now, people who have lost loved ones to this crisis have been screaming from the top of our lungs, trying to get people to hear us," said Phillips. "What United Against Fentanyl and the Walk for Lives movement, has done is brought us all together and given us the opportunity to lock arms across the country and a megaphone for our voices to be heard."

"About 200 parents today will get the call or open that bedroom door. And despite recent reports the fentanyl crisis is improving, it still is the number one cause of death for Americans 18-45," said UAF Founder and CEO Paul Martin. "From the corners of America including Hawaii, Maine, Florida, Washington, and California—across nearly all 50 states—ten thousand people walking in solidarity in one hundred communities on the same day is not a coincidence. It is proof of the resolve of families that will stop at nothing to bring change. They have been carrying this fight alone in their own communities for too long. Walk for Lives connects them each other, and it gives all of us a louder voice."

After July 11, Walk for Lives 2026 will culminate on Saturday, September 26 with a national gathering on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Martin has a vision to grow Walk for Lives to 500 events and 50,000 participants next year with the goal of bringing awareness and education about fentanyl to every community in the nation.

United Against Fentanyl's initiatives also include the [Fentanyl Families Network](#), a membership community providing grief support and paths to action for the approximate 5 million Americans who lost a direct family member to fentanyl in the past decade.

To learn more about Walk for Lives, visit WalkForLives.org

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jacob Lignell, United Against Fentanyl
jacob@unitedagainstfentanyl.org

About United Against Fentanyl

Headquartered in Washington DC, United Against Fentanyl is a nonpartisan national nonprofit organization that interrupts the use of illicit fentanyl through innovative, bold, and effective initiatives. UAF organizes grassroots awareness campaigns and advocates for bipartisan policy change. Its leadership includes experts in foreign policy, law enforcement, public health, medicine, social media, investigative journalism, and business. Learn more at www.UnitedAgainstFentanyl.org.

Jacob Lignell
United Against Fentanyl
2922816880

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[X](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/926345574>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.