



## COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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August 5, 2025

Dr. Steven Stack  
Secretary  
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services  
275 E. Main Street  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621

***Re: Emergency Scheduling of so-called "Designer Xanax" bromazolam***

Dear Secretary Stack:

I write to request the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) take emergency action to schedule bromazolam. Through collaboration with the Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force (NKDSF), we have become aware that bromazolam, a dangerous and unregulated benzodiazepine, is increasingly contributing to overdose deaths and posing a growing threat to public health and safety in our Commonwealth.

Called a "designer Xanax," and originally synthesized but never approved for medical use, bromazolam is now being sold illicitly on the streets and online. It is being passed off as prescription pills, including benzodiazepines. In reality, it is both highly potent and unpredictable, especially when combined with opioids or other central nervous system depressants. Unlike regulated medications, illicitly manufactured bromazolam lacks any quality controls, making it particularly lethal for unsuspecting users.

By using your authority to schedule bromazolam through emergency action, we can immediately empower law enforcement to crack down on the traffickers and distributors of this deadly drug. Your action could have an immediate and lifesaving impact on Kentuckians across our Commonwealth.

Here is just one example of the threat to Kentucky. Earlier this year, the NKDSF and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service interdicted a suspicious parcel shipped from Miami, Florida to Latonia, Kentucky. That one parcel contained 958 pills that were later confirmed to be bromazolam. Without proper scheduling of the "designer Xanax" pills, law enforcement could not adequately charge those responsible for pouring the drugs into Kentucky.

As you know, we live at a time when as little as one pill can – and is – killing our children. There is zero margin of error when it comes to illicit drugs and counterfeit pills. As parents and as public officials, we must do everything possible to cut off the supply of these

deadly substances through vigorous enforcement while continuing to promote the effective prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts that are saving lives across Kentucky.

In Kentucky, the Office of Drug Control Policy has reported 47 overdose deaths in 2024 involving bromazolam, highlighting the devastating impact of this drug in our Commonwealth. Despite its clear dangers, bromazolam remains unscheduled at the federal level, creating significant challenges for law enforcement and public health officials trying to respond to this emerging crisis. Without scheduling, this drug continues to evade traditional regulatory and prosecutorial tools, hindering interdiction efforts and enabling continued distribution through illicit channels.

In addition to seeking this emergency action from the Cabinet, our Office has already engaged the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) regarding the emergency scheduling of bromazolam at the federal level. The troubling rise of hospitalizations and deaths resulting from this designer drug demand this level of urgency.

The Office of the Attorney General stands ready to support your efforts and collaborate on solutions to combat the spread of synthetic and designer drugs. The health and safety of our communities depend on strong, decisive action.

Very respectfully,



Russell Coleman  
Attorney General of Kentucky

CC: Andy Beshear, Governor of Kentucky  
Van Ingram, Executive Director of the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy  
Keith Jackson, Secretary of the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet