SASC Leaders Request DoD Orders and Information on Counternarcotics Operations

Release From the Senate Armed Services Committee

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-R.I.) released two letters to Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth requesting execute orders (EXORDs), legal rationale, and designated terrorist organization lists related to Department of Defense operations against drug trafficking cartels.

The September 23, 2025 letter addresses existing legal requirements under the National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2025 that mandate congressional oversight of military execute orders. The senators are seeking all EXORDs approved by the Secretary of Defense or combatant commanders that underpin DOD activities to combat drug trafficking cartels.

The October 6, 2025 letter requests any written opinion from the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel regarding the domestic or international legal basis for these operations and strikes, and a complete list of all designated terrorist organizations and drug trafficking organizations with whom the President has determined the United States is in a non-international armed conflict and against whom lethal military force may be used.

To date, these documents have not been submitted. These oversight requests were made pursuant to Section 1067 of the FY2025 NDAA, Section 1744 of the FY2020 NDAA, and Section 1230 of the FY2024 NDAA.

A copy of the September 23rd letter may be viewed here.

A copy of the October 6th letter may be viewed here.