

Julie Farnam

FOR ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD

Our Arlington. Our Future.



Drugs in Our Community

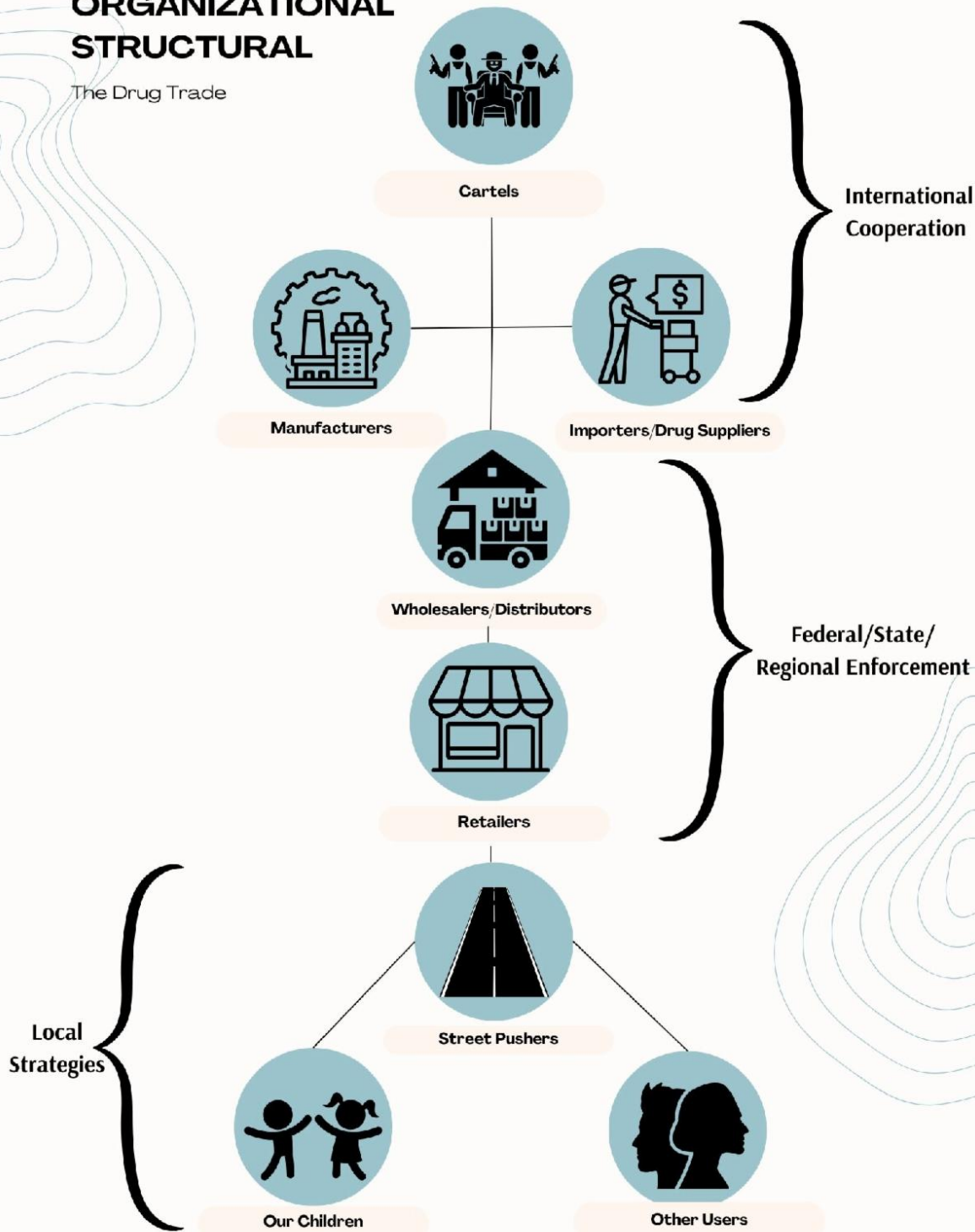
Part 1: The Drug Trade as a Business

I have concerns about the drugs in our community, especially in our schools. Just earlier this month, [another student overdosed in our schools](#). It is one of the reasons I am running for County Board—I have two young daughters who will be in Middle School in a couple years, and I worry for their safety.

As we talk about drugs in our schools, it's helpful to have some foundational knowledge. Illicit drugs, like legal pharmaceuticals, are a business. And a very profitable one at that—generating about [\\$150 billion dollars a year](#) in the United States alone. Although the United States is only about 4% of the world's population, it [consumes approximately 80%](#) of the opioids in the world. [Twenty-seven percent](#) of the world's drug overdose deaths also occur in the United States.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURAL

The Drug Trade



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At the top, you have the cartels—they are the CEOs of the drug trade. At the bottom, you have the customers—the children in our schools and others in our community. But in between you have hierarchical layers in the organizational structure. This is why it is a complex issue to solve because effective solutions require a multifaceted approach requiring coordination between all levels of the government, transnational intervention, and the assistance of community programs.

It's sometimes difficult to see the connection between the cartel leaders at the top, which are sensationalized in movies and on television, but at the community level, their impact is very real. At the community level, we are only addressing the bottom levels of this business and at

that level, it must be a combination of treatment, enforcement to get the pushers off the street, and addressing the root causes of what drives someone to use or sell drugs. But more importantly, we need to work with our state and federal counterparts to help them fight the higher rungs in the drug trade totem pole. This includes data sharing, participation in regional task forces, and having the technical investigative skills to address drugs being sold on the dark web to community members. Illicit drugs are not a problem unique to Arlington and it is one we need not fight alone.

In future newsletters, I'll discuss how fentanyl has impacted the drug trade and the devastating impacts it is having here in Arlington and neighboring communities, the need for more treatment options within the community, and efforts needed to educate kids and others about the dangers of drug use.

Julie Farnam is a mom and small business owner in Arlington. She previously served as the Assistant Director of Intelligence for the United States Capitol Police during one of the most tumultuous periods in this country's history. Prior to joining the Capitol Police, Farnam served with the Department of Homeland Security for over fifteen years. She is author of the book "[Domestic Darkness: An Insider's Account of the January 6th Insurrection, and the Future of Right-Wing Extremism.](#)"

HB 1225: Governance in Arlington

On January 10, 2024, Delegate Patrick Hope introduced [House Bill No. 1225](#). This bill would provide for two changes in Arlington's governance structure:

1. The option to expand the number of members on the County Board, and
2. Would allow for the people of Arlington to choose the chair of the Board.

I am in support of the proposed changes.

Arlington originally adopted its five-member structure in the 1930s, when the County's population was significantly less than it is now. Given our growth, increasing the number of County Board members makes sense.

Item one above is also consistent with the recommendation made in the Task Force in Governance and Election Reform (TiGER) [report](#). Privately, some members of the County Board have expressed their opposition to HB 1225. This opposition is inherently anti-democratic and the people - not the County Board members themselves - should make the decision to implement, or not, the proposed changes.

Upcoming Events



Virtual Office Hours
January 24, 2024 at 7:00pm
Every Wednesday!

Got something on your mind? Julie wants to know. Chat with Julie during her virtual office hours each week.

[Sign Up](#)



Ireland's Four Courts
February 18, 2024 at 7:00pm

Join Julie for great conversation at the newly reopened Ireland's Four Courts (2051 Wilson Blvd., Arlington) on Sunday, February 18, 2024, at 7:00pm.

[Sign Up](#)



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I remain committed to helping Arlington thrive. Your donation makes that possible. Our Arlington. Our Future.

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