



AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

September 10, 2018

Dear Attorney General Sessions

I write urging you to implement the current Drug Enforcement Administration policy stance that allows for private cultivation of cannabis for federally approved research and drug development. This would allow new medicines and treatments to continue through the Food and Drug Administration process and open a multi-billion-dollar market to American researchers and industry.

In August of 2016, the DEA announced a policy change stating that “persons may become registered with the DEA to grow cannabis not only to supply federally funded or other academic researchers, but also for strictly commercial endeavors funded by the private sector and aimed at drug product development.”

In order for a product to undergo final phase testing with the FDA, a manufacturer must use the ingredients that will go to market. However, there is only one approved source for research and this source is not available for commercial production. As such, medications cannot complete the FDA approval process. Licensing private domestic sources for cannabis research would create a pathway for federally regulated, privately funded medical cannabis drug development.

This single source is government owned and operated. After the DEA’s policy announcement, there are now over 25 applications to cultivate cannabis for federal research purposes. Approval of any of these applications would end the 50-year government monopoly on cannabis for FDA and DEA approved research. Businessweek recently valued the medical cannabis market at \$30 billion worldwide. However, the United States is ceding leadership in medical research and drug development because Attorney General Jeff Sessions left these applications fallow due to inaction. The DEA should be able to approve or deny with just cause these applications in accordance with the directive.

If the test subject were dandelions, there would be no controversy. That fact that some choose to abuse the cannabis plant illegally is immaterial to medical research. The use of controlled substances for legitimate research purposes is well established and has yielded a number of miracle medicines now widely available to doctors and patients.

I ask that you allow the DEA to consider and grant, as appropriate, cultivation licenses to private producers.

Onward,

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