



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

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July 22, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Oppose Congressional move to block medical marijuana rescheduling

Dear President Trump,

I write to urge your opposition to congressional appropriations language that would block the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") from rescheduling marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act. The DEA is already in the process of rescheduling marijuana from a Schedule I to a Schedule III – a move that you supported in your presidential campaign.¹ That process should be allowed to play out. Americans deserve leadership that won't move the goalposts on them in the middle of the game.

The DEA's Rescheduling process has been underway now for more than a year. In spring of 2024, the DEA proposed a rule that would reschedule marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III. As part of this process, the DEA received over 42,000 public comments, demonstrating broad public interest in rescheduling.

I joined that effort because this is about helping people. Rescheduling would provide suffering patients the relief they need. It would ensure communities are safer – because legal medical products reduce the illicit market. It would provide new, meaningful research on health benefits.

That's why a year ago I signed a letter to the DEA urging it to reschedule marijuana to Schedule III. *See* attached Letter. I did so because the jury is no longer out on marijuana. It has medical benefits. The medical and scientific communities – including the United States Department for Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse – all agree that marijuana has a current, accepted medical use.

¹ September 8, 2024, Truth Social Post by Donald J. Trump, available at <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/113105431683796730> (last visited July 16, 2025).

And rescheduling is just common sense. Over 40 states now have medical marijuana programs. Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly agree on this issue, including in Kentucky, where you won a vast majority of the vote in 2016, 2020 and 2024, and where a Republican supermajority passed legislation legalizing medical marijuana in 2023 – legislation that I signed into law. The federal government has fallen far behind on this issue and finally needs to catch up.

During your presidential campaign, you agreed. In September 2024, you stated “....[a]s President, we will continue to focus on research to unlock the medical uses of marijuana to a Schedule 3 drug, and work with Congress to pass common sense laws... ”²

Now, it is time to make good on your promises to the American people. On July 15, 2025, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) passed Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 appropriations language that would prohibit DOJ from using funds to reschedule marijuana from its current Schedule I listing. The Subcommittee’s language reads:

SEC. 607. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to reschedule marijuana (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)) or to remove marijuana from the schedules established under section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

This is not a common-sense law. It stops a process that is already underway to accomplish a policy end that is overwhelmingly supported by the medical and scientific communities as well as the American people – of every political party. Congress should not take the decision-making process out of the hands of medical and scientific experts when they don’t like the results.

I hope that your action on this issue matches the promises you made to the American people to support Rescheduling and work with Congress to ensure laws passed are truly “common sense.”

Again, I urge you to oppose the House Appropriations Committee’s proposed language to block the DEA from rescheduling marijuana.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your attention and prompt action on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Andy Beshear
Governor

² *Id.*



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

July 17, 2024

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The Honorable Ann Milgram
Administrator
U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Attn: DEA Federal Register Representative/DPW
8701 Morrisette Drive
Springfield, Virginia 22152

Re: *Docket No. DEA-1362: Kentucky Support for Rescheduling of Marijuana to Schedule III*

Dear Administrator Milgram:

I write to express my support for the United States Department of Health and Human Services' ("HHS") recommendation that the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") reschedule marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III under the Controlled Substances Act.

As Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, my job is to move our state forward. Rescheduling marijuana to Schedule III is a significant, common-sense step forward for all Kentuckians, especially those with serious medical conditions.

Rescheduling marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III will have substantial and meaningful impacts:

For patients, rescheduling destigmatizes medical marijuana, confirms medical freedom, provides an alternative to deadly opioids, and ensures continued access to safe products.

For communities, rescheduling means legal medical cannabis programs continue to provide a secure alternative to illicit and unregulated markets, further reducing crime and abuse.

For businesses, rescheduling means fair markets – placing cannabis businesses on the same economic footing as any other business.

For the scientific community, rescheduling means real opportunities for research on marijuana.

As a Schedule I drug, marijuana is currently in the same classification as heroin and LSD, which means it has "no current accepted medical use." This also means marijuana is considered more dangerous than Schedule II drugs, such as fentanyl, oxycodone, methadone, methamphetamine, and Vicodin.

The jury is no longer out on marijuana: it has medical uses and is currently being used for medical purposes. This recognition is overwhelming – and bipartisan. In Kentucky, for example, I signed a medical marijuana law that passed with support from Republican legislative supermajorities and a Democratic Governor.

Kentuckians know exactly how dangerous other Schedule I and II drugs are. When I served as Attorney General, I held Big Pharma accountable for how they devastated our communities. Kentucky led the nation then in the number of individual opioid lawsuits filed by an attorney general. From our lawsuits, we ultimately secured over \$900 million in funds from pharmaceutical companies who preyed on Kentucky's communities.

We saw the devastation these supposedly “less harmful” drugs caused to our families and communities. From 2012 to 2016, Kentucky experienced more than 1,250 opioid overdose deaths in four counties alone. During the same time period, over 5,800 Kentuckians died from opioid abuse. However, according to Kentucky's Office of Drug Control Policy, during that same period we experienced *no* marijuana overdose deaths. Nationally, opioid use killed 80,000 Americans in 2022. In the same year, marijuana use alone killed zero Americans. That is why Kentucky's Office of Drug Control Policy, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities all support rescheduling.

Thankfully, a well-regulated medical marijuana market provides an alternative to opioids. Our sister states have shown that medical marijuana programs are safe. With age-restrictions, rigorous testing standards, packaging and labeling requirements, and advertising restrictions, state medical marijuana markets have provided safe, effective medical products to millions of Americans. We look forward to seeing how safe medical marijuana products will reduce the suffering and improve the lives of tens of thousands of Kentuckians when our Program launches in 2025.

As Governor, I will continue to put the health and safety of Kentuckians first. That means supporting sensible drug policies like rescheduling marijuana to Schedule III. For these reasons, I support the HHS recommendation to reschedule marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your attention and prompt action on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Andy Beshear
Governor