

23 March 2020

Governor Larry Hogan, Chair
Governor Andrew Cuomo, Vice Chair
Members, Executive Committee
National Governors Association
444 N. Capitol St NW, Ste. 267
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: EMERGENCY CALL TO ACTION TO GOVERNORS IN STATES WITH MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAMS

Dear Chair Hogan, Vice Chair Cuomo, & Members of the Executive Committee:

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the undersigned national drug policy, HIV/AIDS, and public health organizations write to all U.S. governors and medical cannabis program directors to amplify a letter sent last week by the nation's leading medical cannabis and patient advocacy group, Americans for Safe Access (ASA). We are joining their call for necessary, immediate actions and safeguards to ensure that medical cannabis patients do not experience disrupted access to crucial medicine.

Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia have medical cannabis laws enacted and, cumulatively, these states serve over [three](#) million patients. Medical cannabis patients often live with debilitating ailments, such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, and chronic pain that significantly affect quality of life. It is critical that policymakers and other decision makers who are working to address the current COVID-19 pandemic are also considering the public health consequences that will follow the decision to abruptly interrupt the legal supply chain for medical cannabis patients. We are especially worried about vulnerable patients being unintentionally pushed to the unregulated market, where there will not be access to lab-tested, tightly controlled products. This could endanger the health of those who rely on cannabis as medicine.

The undersigned organizations -- who support research and access to medical cannabis -- join ASA in calls for the recognition of medical cannabis as necessary medicine and for the recommendations below to be implemented to ensure that patients' access to medicinal cannabis will continue.

We understand that we are living through unprecedented and uncertain times. We urge you to consider these recommendations as crucial steps to bring some certainty and relief to patients.

Sincerely,



AIDS United • Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center • CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers • Compass LGBTQ Community Center • Drug Policy Alliance • Harm Reduction Coalition • Marijuana Policy Project • National Minority AIDS Council • National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) • NORML • North Star Fund • Oklahomans for Equality • The Pride Center at Equality Park • SOJOURN • Students for Sensible Drug Policy