

LEGALIZE IT RIGHT: FEDERAL CANNABIS REGULATION

Recommendations to Center Health Equity, Social Equity, Justice, and Accountability

Federal cannabis regulation, if done right, can be a tool for achieving health equity, social equity, justice and accountability. Federal reform provides a radically new opportunity to re-envision a world beyond prohibition by not only ending it, but also acknowledging and taking responsibility for the harm it has caused, beginning to repair the harms of the past, and taking action to prevent future systems of harm.

To develop such a proposal, the Drug Policy Alliance convened a working group comprised of cannabis state regulators, public health professionals, criminal justice reform advocates, civil rights attorneys, people working with directly impacted communities in the cannabis industry, re-entry advocates, academics and an expert involved in Canada's cannabis regulation—to think deeply about how, ideally, marijuana laws should be changed at the federal level to accomplish these goals. The result of this process is a comprehensive set of recommendations for Congress that center reparative justice, social and health equity, and community reinvestment as the central goals of regulation, rather than a subset of larger policy reform.

We must end the harms of cannabis prohibition by:

- Acknowledging the history of prohibition and taking responsibility for the harms of it
- Descheduling cannabis
- Ending criminalization & punishment for cannabis
- Limiting the consequences of cannabis use or convictions
- Refocusing & reprioritizing enforcement by restricting federal law enforcement funding, limiting the role of police and ending racially-biased enforcement

We must repair the harms of cannabis prohibition by:

- Automatically expunging past federal cannabis arrests and convictions
- Funding and incentivizing states to expunge state cannabis arrests and convictions
- Establishing a just and equitable industry
- Limiting barriers for people with past drug convictions from participating in the industry
- Enacting a progressive federal tax to support an equitable industry
- Ensuring profits are redirected back into the communities that have been most harmed

We must prevent further harm by:

- Properly regulating cannabis to protect consumer health and privacy, the environment, minors, and ensure fair and safe labor practices
- Creating a federal oversight and accountability board
- Limiting and tightly regulating large corporate entities
- Encouraging and funding research
- Protecting tribal interests and respecting tribal sovereignty
- Ensuring international trade policies protect domestic producers and do not put unnecessary barriers on importation from traditional source countries

The working group's full recommendations can be found at drugpolicy.org/FedCannabisRecs.

**We are
the Drug
Policy
Alliance.**

