

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 28, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

We write to urge you to reject the Biden Administration's corrupt and flawed recommendation to reclassify marijuana as a Schedule III drug. **Rescheduling marijuana would send a message to kids that marijuana is not harmful and allow Big Marijuana and foreign drug cartels to get billions per year in federal tax breaks.**

In 2024, during the Biden Administration, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommended that marijuana be transferred from Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to Schedule III of the CSA. Their decision was met with immediate pushback from experts across the political spectrum who agreed that there is no adequate science or data to support moving marijuana to Schedule III. Marijuana belongs as a Schedule I drug.

Marijuana supporters argue that marijuana has no business being in the same drug Schedule as heroin, but their argument relies on a misunderstanding of the drug scheduling system. Drug scheduling is not a harm index. Instead, drug scheduling weighs both potential for abuse and the accepted medical value of a specific drug. Marijuana, while different than heroin, still has the potential for abuse and has no scientifically proven medical value. Therefore, rescheduling marijuana would not only be objectively wrong, but it would also imply to our children that marijuana is safe. That couldn't be further from the truth.

Marijuana's potential for abuse is high; the addiction rate is a staggering 30%.¹ One study suggest that as many as 30% of schizophrenia cases in young men might have been prevented if they had not abused marijuana.² Another study found a clear association between marijuana use and psychosis, anxiety, cognitive failures, respiratory adverse events, cancer, cardiovascular outcomes and gastrointestinal disorders.³ Other research on the effects of marijuana found that marijuana use elevates the risk of heart attack and stroke by 25% and 42%, respectively.⁴ These issues are worse than ever before, as a significant number of people now regularly use marijuana. In 1992, fewer than one million Americans used marijuana daily. In 2022, close to 18 million were daily users, outpacing daily alcohol use rates.⁵

¹ *Is Marijuana Addictive?*, National Institute on Drug Abuse, (2021),

<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/marijuana-addictive>.

² *Young men at highest risk of schizophrenia linked with cannabis use disorder* (2023), <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/young-men-highest-risk-schizophrenia-linked-cannabis-use-disorder>.

³ *The blind men and the elephant: Systemic review of systemic reviews of cannabis use related health harms* (2020) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32165103/>.

⁴ *Cannabis use linked to increase in heart attack and stroke risk* (2024), <https://newsroom.heart.org/news/cannabis-use-linked-to-increase-in-heart-attack-and-stroke-risk>.

⁵ *Daily Marijuana use outpaces drinking in the US* (2024), <https://apnews.com/article/marijuana-cannabis-alcohol-drinking-daily-use-b91c2c5957fdb2d48e6616c3baa14c13>

Smoking marijuana is also not an accepted medication. “Medical” marijuana is not any different than “recreational” marijuana. Oftentimes, “medical” marijuana is smoked, despite the carcinogenic effects of inhaling smoke into the lungs. “Medical” marijuana has been treated differently than any other medicine: it’s voted on by ballot measure, given in near unlimited quantities to those who get cards to use it, and doled out not in pharmacies but commercial dispensaries where “budtenders” recommend the best brownies or cookies laced with high-potency pot. Many contend that “medical marijuana” is needed to combat certain ailments like anxiety or PTSD. However, one study found that marijuana use among veterans with PTSD was associated with worse PTSD symptoms, more violent behavior, and alcohol use.⁶

Rescheduling marijuana will immediately give tax breaks to illegal marijuana dispensaries and cartels to the tune of \$2 billion per year. Tax code Section 280E prevents drug traffickers who are selling Schedule I or II narcotics from expensing business deductions and getting tax credits.⁷ This is a commonsense law, but the authors of it in 1982 never could have predicted that federally illegal drug sales would be sanctioned under state law without interference. If marijuana is made Schedule III, these still-illegal actors will get billions in tax write offs for marketing their addictive drugs.

Chinese drug cartels will get a tax break, too. Thousands of farms across the country are run by Chinese drug lords that grow marijuana and commit a host of other crimes. These cartels are making billions off the marijuana trade, and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has found that many are state-licensed.⁸ These actors will be able to receive deductions and tax credits, too, giving billions of federal dollars to cartels rather than law-abiding American citizens. It’s not just foreign cartels, but state-legal marijuana farms that employ illegal migrants and unaccompanied minors like Glass House, the facility that was raided by federal law enforcement last month.⁹

Marijuana rescheduling will enable criminal activity and harm our kids. We don’t want the smell of marijuana flooding every public space, we don’t want our kids being enticed by deceptive marijuana marketing, and we don’t want even more drugs flooding our streets. We respectfully urge you to follow the science and oppose downgrading marijuana.

CC:

The Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America

Sincerely,

⁶ *Marijuana use is associated with worse outcomes in symptom severity and violent behavior in patients with posttraumatic stress disorder* (2015) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26455669/>.

⁷ 26 U.S. Code § 280E (1982)

⁸ *Grassley Highlights Nexus Between Chinese Money Laundering and State-Sanctioned Marijuana at Senate Drug Caucus Hearing* (2024), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-highlights-nexus-between-chinese-money-laundering-and-state-sanctioned-marijuana-at-senate-drug-caucus-hearing>

⁹ *ICE, CBP Arrest at Least 361 Illegal Aliens During Marijuana Grow Site Operation, Rescue at Least 14 Children* (2025), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/07/13/ice-cbp-arrest-least-361-illegal-aliens-during-marijuana-grow-site-operation-rescue>



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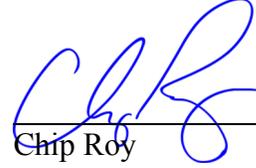
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