



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.E.
WASHINGTON, DC 20002
PHONE 202-547-8189 • FAX 202-547-8190

CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
4 JANUARY 2017

CONTACT: TIM RICHARDSON
202-547-8189

FOP PRESIDENT CANTERBURY ON COLE MEMO REVOCATION ***FOP APPLAUDS AG SESSIONS MOVE ON MARIJUANA***

Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, applauded today's announcement by Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions III that the U.S. Department of Justice was rescinding the Cole Memo and restoring discretion to our nation's U.S. Attorneys on investigations into violations of Federal drug laws involving marijuana.

The Cole Memo, issued in 2013 in response to several States removing criminal penalties for the use and possession of marijuana, allowed for the creation of a "pot industry" and created a veneer of legitimacy to violations of Federal law, which prohibits the use, possession and production of this dangerous drug.

"From 1996, when he was elected to the Senate, to today as our nation's 'top cop,' Attorney General Sessions has been a key law enforcement ally and supporter of the rule of law," said Canterbury. "Like our members, he is also a strong proponent of Federal enforcement of our nation's narcotics laws. This experiment of giving cover to drug dealers has had fatal consequences. When marijuana was 'legalized' in Colorado, traffic-related deaths due to marijuana rose from 13% to 20%. This is costing people their lives."

The Attorney General's announcement is good news for public safety and public health. There will be no Federal agents chasing individual users—but it will give law enforcement the discretion it lost when the Cole Memo was issued.

"As our nation celebrated the New Year, many of us caught live coverage of drug use on CNN, a violation of Federal law and a dangerous contribution to normalizing drug abuse," said Canterbury. "Our members don't make law or policy—we enforce it. If our citizens want to change the existing law, they should do so. As law enforcement officers, we cannot pick and choose what laws will be enforced."

The Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States with more than 330,000 members in every region of the country.