



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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12 June 2018

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Representative Lowey,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong opposition to any amendment offered in Committee markups on any appropriations measure that would allow the marijuana industry full access to the American banking system.

Under the Controlled Substances Act, marijuana is a Schedule I drug and is classified as such because of the high potential for abuse and because there is no accepted medical use for marijuana that is recognized by the Federal government.

In 1998, the National Fraternal Order of Police was among the first national organizations to oppose State and local efforts to legalize this dangerous drug. Despite consistent and vigorous opposition from the FOP as well as other law enforcement, public safety and public health organizations, certain States have legalized the use, sale, production and possession of marijuana for recreational and purported medicinal reasons which is at variance with existing Federal law. At the FOP National Conference in 2017, our members passed a resolution reaffirming our support for the prohibition of marijuana.

Public safety is threatened by the growing use of marijuana nationwide with the greatest negative impact in States that no longer comport with existing Federal law. Studies have shown that persons who use marijuana at age 17 or younger are four times more likely to become addicted to opioids, contributing to the national epidemic of opioid-related deaths that now claim more lives per year than automobile crashes and firearms combined. Studies have also shown, that teens who use marijuana at least once per month are 13 times more likely to use another drug like cocaine, heroin, or methamphetamine.

Researchers from the University of Colorado, Johns Hopkins University, and Harvard Medical School who analyzed the impact of legalization in Colorado determined the following:

- Evidence of a persistent black market for marijuana which may increase the presence of Mexican drug cartels which are bringing in other drugs like heroin.

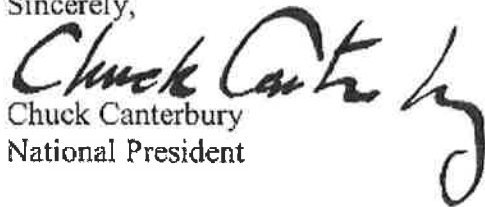
- Some cartels have stopped shipping marijuana into Colorado, but now control growing operations and export it to other markets.
- Higher rates of traffic fatalities while driving under the influence of marijuana.
- Increase in marijuana-related poisonings and hospital visits.
- No reduction in crime or significant increase in tax revenues.
- Use of marijuana by children less than 17 years of age is rising faster than the national average and arrests of juveniles for marijuana-related offenses are up 5%.

Marijuana, like any illegal drug, is a risk to public safety. It has been intrinsically linked to the violence of drug trafficking and is not “harmless.” Any amendment that allows access to the banking system for the illegal marijuana industry, creates a dangerous precedent that could allow access for other criminal activity and Schedule I drugs. The vicious drug cartels who push marijuana through our borders will be given the opportunity to launder money under the guise of marijuana normalization.

We urge all members of the Committee and Subcommittees to reject amendments that would enable more of our fellow citizens to use our banks to traffic in marijuana—the risk to public safety and health is just too great.

On behalf of the more than 335,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, thank you for considering our views on this issue. If I can be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Senior Advisor, Jim Pasco, in my Washington office.

Sincerely,



Chuck Canterbury
National President