



Members Of Congress Introduce Measures To Legalize Marijuana, Regulate Sales

Washington, DC: Members of Congress [introduced](#) historic [legislation](#) this week to permit the regulated production and retail sales of cannabis to adults in states that have legalized its consumption.

[The Ending Marijuana Prohibition Act](#) of 2013, sponsored by Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO) removes cannabis from the control of the US Drug Enforcement Administration and authorizes the United States Department of Treasury to license state-authorized retail marijuana producers and distributors.

"This legislation doesn't force any state to legalize marijuana," Rep. Polis said. "But Colorado and the 18 other jurisdictions that have chosen to allow marijuana for medical or recreational use deserve the certainty of knowing that federal agents won't raid state-legal businesses. Congress should simply allow states to regulate marijuana as they see fit and stop wasting federal tax dollars on the failed drug war."

[The Marijuana Tax Equity Act](#), introduced by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), imposes an excise tax on the first sale of marijuana in a manner similar to the taxes that are presently imposed for the commercial production and sale of alcohol and

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Industrial Hemp Farming Legislation Reintroduced In Congress

Washington, DC: United States Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) and 28 co-sponsors, including House Agriculture Committee ranking member Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), have [reintroduced legislation](#) in Congress that requires the federal government to respect state laws allowing for the cultivation of industrial hemp. Hemp is a [distinct variety](#) of the plant species cannabis sativa that contains only trace (less than one percent) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis.

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Medical Cannabis Protection Measures Reintroduced In Congress

Washington, DC: Members of the United States House of Representatives reintroduced legislation in Congress last week to protect state-authorized medical marijuana patients from federal prosecution. [House Bill 689, the States' Medical Marijuana Patient Protection Act](#),

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Czech Republic Legalizes Cannabis For Medicinal Consumption

Prague, Czech Republic: Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus [signed](#) legislation into law last week legalizing the use of cannabis for therapeutic purposes. Under the new [law](#), patients with a physician's authorization will be able to access cannabis from pharmacies.

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Michigan: Court Rules That Cannabis Dispensaries Are Not Permitted Under State's Medical Marijuana Act

Lansing, MI: A 2008 citizens' initiative allowing for the physician authorized use of cannabis does not explicitly permit the establishment of brick-and-mortar facilities to dispense the product, according to a [ruling](#) by the Michigan Supreme Court. In a 4-1 [decision](#), the Court held that [the law](#) does not permit a registered

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The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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Check 'em out on-line! *visit:*

WillametteValleyNORML.org

A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: www.norml.org**

Willamette Valley NORML is your local network in the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from **MEMBERS OF CONGRESS INTRODUCE MEASURES TO LEGALIZE MARIJUANA, REGULATE SALES, page 1** > tobacco. Stated Rep. Blumenauer: "We are in the process of a dramatic shift in the marijuana policy landscape. Public attitude, state law, and established practices are all creating irreconcilable difficulties for public officials at every level of government. We want the federal government to be a responsible partner with the rest of the universe of marijuana interests while we address what federal policy should be regarding drug taxation, classification, and legality."



NORML Communications Director Erik Altieri praised the bills' introduction: "When residents of Colorado and Washington voted to end their state's prohibition on marijuana last November, it was a watershed moment for our nation's move towards sane marijuana laws," he said. "But there remains a lingering conflict between state and federal law. These historic measures seek to resolve this conflict and empower states to dictate their own marijuana policies, without fear of federal incursion. NORML would like to thank the Congressmen for taking this brave step forward and encourages their colleagues in Congress to join them in calling for sensible marijuana law reform."

Representatives Blumenauer and Polis also issued a [report](#) on Tuesday outlining the need for federal marijuana law reform. Their report, entitled, "A Path Forward: Rethinking Federal Marijuana Policy," states: "It is time for Congress to allow states and voters to decide how they want to treat marijuana. The current system is broken. It wastes resources and destroys individual lives, in turn damaging families and entire communities. It is past time to take action and stop this tragic waste in the future."

The report concludes: "While individual states remain the laboratories of innovation, it is time for the federal government to make sure that states, businesses, and individuals are able to act in an environment that has coherent and consistent laws. Congress should pursue each of the following options: Tax and regulate marijuana; ... Allow states to enact existing medical marijuana laws without federal interference; ... Remove [the] ban on industrial hemp; ... Allow the marijuana industry to operate in a normal business environment."

According to a December 2012 Public Policy Polling telephone [survey](#) of US voters, 58 percent of

Americans believe that marijuana "should be legal." Only 34 percent of respondents opposed the notion of legalizing cannabis. A new [poll](#) conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International and released last week reports that 53 percent of Americans believe that "the government should treat marijuana the same as alcohol," while over 70 percent of respondents say that the federal government should butt out of the affairs of states that have legalized the plant.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Erik Altieri, NORML Communications Director, at (202) 483-5500. Additional information regarding these measures is available from NORML's 'Take Action Center' [here: http://www.capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=62380561](http://www.capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=62380561).

<continued from **INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING LEGISLATION REINTRODUCED IN CONGRESS, page 1** > [House Bill 525](#), the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2013, amends the federal Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marijuana. The measure grants state legislatures the authority to license and regulate the commercial production of hemp as an industrial and agricultural commodity.

[Eight states](#) - Colorado, Maine, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia - have enacted statutory changes defining



industrial hemp as a distinct agricultural product and allowing for its regulated commercial production. Passage of HR 525 would remove existing federal barriers and would permit these states and others the authority to do so without running afoul of federal anti-drug laws.

"Industrial hemp is a sustainable crop and could be a great economic opportunity for Kentucky farmers," Rep. Massie stated in a [press release](#). "Industrial hemp will give small farmers another opportunity to succeed."

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) are [supporting](#) the introduction of a companion bill in the US Senate.

According to a Congressional Research Service [report](#), "The United States is the only developed nation in which industrial hemp is not an established crop."

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<continued from previous page> Previous versions of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act have stalled in Congress. The issue has never before been debated in the Senate. For more information, please visit: <http://www.votehemp.com>. To support HR 525, please visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://www.capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.

US Senate Considers Hemp Farming Bill For First Time

Washington, DC: Senate lawmakers have introduced legislation in Congress to allow for the commercial production of industrial hemp. It is the first time in modern history that such legislation has ever been before members of the United States Senate.



Senators Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Rand Paul (R-KY), and Ron Wyden (D-OR) are sponsoring [Senate Bill 359](#), which seeks to amend the US Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marijuana. The measure grants state legislatures the authority to license and regulate the commercial production of hemp as an industrial and agricultural commodity.

"I am convinced that allowing [hemp] production will be a positive development for Kentucky's farm families and economy," said McConnell, who is the Senate minority leader. "The utilization of hemp to produce everything from clothing to paper is real, and if there is a capacity to center a new domestic industry in Kentucky that will create jobs in these difficult economic times, that sounds like a good thing to me."

Senate Bill 359 awaits action from the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is the companion bill to House Bill 525, the [Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2013](#). That measure has 28 co-sponsors.

Eight states -- Colorado, Maine, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia -- have enacted statutory changes defining industrial hemp as distinct agricultural product and allowing for its regulated commercial production. Passage of HR 525/S 359 would remove existing federal barriers and allow these states and others the authority to do so without running afoul of federal anti-drug laws. According to a Congressional Research Service [report](#), "The United States is the

only developed nation in which industrial hemp is not an established crop." Hemp is a distinct [variety](#) of the plant species *cannabis sativa* that contains only trace (less than one percent) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.votehemp.com>. Additional information regarding S 259/HR 525 is available from NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://www.capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=62399531>.

<continued from MEDICAL CANNABIS PROTECTION MEASURES REINTRODUCED IN CONGRESS, page 1 > would ensure that medical cannabis patients in [states that have approved its use](#) will no longer have to fear arrest or prosecution from federal law enforcement agencies. It states, "No provision of the Controlled Substances Act shall prohibit or otherwise restrict in a State in which marijuana may be prescribed or recommended by a physician for medical use under applicable state law."

The measure also calls for the federal government to reclassify cannabis so that it is no longer categorized as a [Schedule I](#) prohibited substance with no accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse. It states: "Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration shall, based upon the recommendation under paragraph (1), issue a notice of proposed rulemaking for the rescheduling of marijuana within the Controlled Substances Act, which shall include a recommendation to list marijuana as other than a Schedule I or Schedule II."



In January, a three-judge panel for the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia [denied petitioners request to overturn the Obama administration's July 2011 rejection](#) of an administrative petition that sought to initiate hearings regarding the reclassification of marijuana under federal law.

Separate federal legislation, [House Bill 710: The Truth in Trials Act](#), which provides an affirmative defense in federal court for defendants whose actions were in compliance with the medical marijuana laws of their state, is also once again pending before the US House of Representatives. Prior version of this measure failed to make it out of committee. Additional information on these measures is available from NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://www.capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.

<continued from CZECH REPUBLIC LEGALIZES CANNABIS FOR MEDICINAL CONSUMPTION, page 1 > Initially, cannabis will be imported into the country. However, the law also allows for the eventual domestic production of cannabis for medical purposes by state-licensed producers.



Individual patients will not be allowed to cultivate their own cannabis under the law.

Canada, Israel, and The Netherlands also allow for the state-licensed production of medical marijuana for qualified patients.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

<continued from MICHIGAN: COURT RULES THAT CANNABIS DISPENSARIES ARE NOT PERMITTED UNDER STATE'S MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT, page 1 > qualifying patient to transfer marijuana to another registered qualifying patient.

Therefore, the Court decided that businesses that provided services involving the patient-to-patient transfer of cannabis were not allowable under the present law.

By contrast, the Court did find that the sale of cannabis from a caregiver to a qualified patient did constitute 'medical use' under the law.

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette [said](#) that the Court's decision "empowers county prosecutors across the state to shut down remaining dispensaries that sell marijuana" as they now qualify as a "public nuisance."

According to media reports, Schuette [intends](#) to direct prosecutors

across the state "to file public nuisance charges against any remaining such dispensaries in Michigan."



At the time of the ruling, an [estimated](#) 75 to 100 dispensaries were believed to be operating in the state.

Sixty-three percent of Michigan voters [approved](#) Proposal 1 in 2008. The Act removes state-level criminal penalties on the use, possession and cultivation of marijuana by patients who possess written documentation from their physicians authorizing the medical use of marijuana.

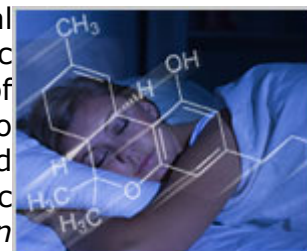
In response to the decision, Rep. Mike Callton (R-Nashville) said that he [intends](#) to introduce legislation to legalize and regulate medical cannabis dispensaries.

The case is State v. Compassionate Apothecary, LLC.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

Study: Oral THC Administration Mitigates Sleep Apnea

Chicago, IL: The oral administration of synthetic THC reduces symptoms of sleep apnea, according to clinical trial [data](#) published online in the scientific journal *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. [Sleep apnea](#) is



a medical disorder characterized by frequent interruptions in breathing of up to ten seconds or more during sleep. The condition is associated with numerous physiological disorders, including fatigue, headaches, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, heart attack and stroke.

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Investigators at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Medicine assessed the safety, tolerability, and efficacy of dronabinol (oral THC in sesame seed oil) in 17 subjects with Obstructive Sleep Apnea.

Oral THC administration was associated with a significant change in Apnea Hypopnea Index over a 21-day period. Authors further determined dronabinol treatment to be safe and well tolerated.

They concluded, "These findings should be confirmed in a larger study in order to identify sub-populations with OSA that may benefit from cannabimimetic pharmacologic therapy."

[Dronabinol](#), marketed under the trade name Marinol, is FDA-approved to treat nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Proof of concept trial of dronabinol in obstructive sleep apnea," is available in *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.*

Florida: 7 in 10 Voters Back Constitutional Amendment To Legalize Medical Marijuana

Miami, FL: Seven out of ten Florida voters favor amending state law to allow physicians to authorize cannabis therapy, according to polling data released this week (Thursday, 28 February 2013).

The [statewide poll](#), conducted by Hamilton Campaigns and commissioned by the advocacy group People United for Medical Marijuana ([PUFMM](#)),

reported that 70 percent of voters backed the passage of a constitutional amendment legalizing the medicinal use of marijuana. Only 24 percent of voters opposed the effort.



Non-Hispanic white women, blacks and Hispanics - all Democratic-leaning -

were most likely to back the measure. Fifty-six percent of self-identified Republican voters also said that they favored the measure.

The poll numbers come just days before legislation is formally introduced in the state Senate to allow for the limited use of cannabis for therapeutic purposes. Companion legislation is also expected to be introduced shortly in the House.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

Study: Nonpsychoactive Cannabinoid Mitigates Colitis

Naples, Italy: The administration of the nonpsychotropic cannabinoid [cannabigerol](#) (CBG) mitigates colitis (inflammation of the large intestine) in a preclinical model and ought to be assessed in clinical trials, according to [data](#) published online in the journal *Biochemical Pharmacology*.

Investigators at the University of Naples assessed the impact of CBG in a murine model of colitis. They reported that CBG attenuated colitis and "could be considered for clinical experimentation in IBD (inflammatory bowel disease) patients."

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Cannabigerol is an organic cannabinoid that possesses therapeutic potential as an antibacterial agent and as a bone stimulant, according to a limited number of preclinical trials.



Use of cannabis is relatively [common](#) among patients with IBD. In preclinical trials, cannabinoids have [reduced inflammation and "enhanced epithelial wound closure"](#) in human tissue. In 2011, an observational [study](#) reported subjects' cannabis use was associated with a reduction in Crohn's disease activity and disease-related surgeries.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Beneficial effect of the non-psychoactive plant cannabinoid cannabigerol on experimental inflammatory bowel disease," appears in *Biochemical Pharmacology*.*

NORML Provides Educational Content To TheAnswerPage.com

Washington, DC: The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws is providing educational content to the editors of [The Answer Page, Inc.](#) in an effort to better inform physicians about the science and legal issues surrounding cannabis.

The Answer Page, Inc. is an [online medical educational resource](#) founded in 1998 that provides daily education to healthcare professionals in 120 countries. TheAnswerPage (online at [TheAnswerPage.com](#)) uses the Socratic question-and-answer teaching method. The content for the website is primarily written by academic clinicians respected in their fields. All content is peer-reviewed and referenced from current texts and recent literature.

Beginning in February, theAnswerPage began featuring educational content in the area of medical marijuana. The editorial team of TheAnswerPage states: "Medical marijuana may be controversial, but it is now an important area of study in healthcare. Doctors and healthcare professionals must understand the medical, legal, social and political issues to best respond to their patients' questions and attend to their needs."



Stated NORML's Deputy Director Paul Armentano: "NORML recognizes that physicians and health care professionals desire balanced information regarding the safety and efficacy of cannabis as a potential therapy. NORML is pleased to provide its expertise to TheAnswerPage to assist health care professionals better understand and navigate this important public health issue."

Subscribers to TheAnswerPage receive continuing medical education (CME) credit by reading the content and completing an industry-unique Interactive Crossword Puzzle. The clues are structured to reinforce the educational material, and links are provided to the related content. Subscribers have personal educational accounts that organize their earned CME credit and allow clinicians to download, email or print CME certificates for credentialing and licensing.

[TheAnswerPage.com](#) has over 50 interactive crossword puzzles posted, for earning CME credit. New content and crosswords are posted daily.

[TheAnswerPage's](#) medical cannabis content is available at the 'syllabus;' select the pull down menu option: "Medical Marijuana -- Medical, Legal, Social, and political Issues." Free registration to the site is required.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.



News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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