



California **NORML**

National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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Jun 7th, 2010

Assemblyman William Monning, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Monning:

We urge the Health Committee to approve SJR 14 by Sen. Leno, calling on the federal government to recognize medical use of marijuana.

It is now over 13 years since Californians approved Prop. 215, legalizing the medical use of marijuana. Since then, its use has been legalized in 13 other states and several foreign countries. Scores of scientific studies have confirmed the medical efficacy of marijuana; most recently, the California Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research reported marijuana to be therapeutically effective in five out of five controlled clinical trials. The AMA has also called for federal reconsideration of marijuana's schedule one status.

Unfortunately, the U.S. government has failed to take any steps to reform obsolescent federal laws and regulations prohibiting medical marijuana. Instead, it has continued to prosecute and arrest people for marijuana offenses, discouraged implementation of a legal distribution system, and actively impeded research and development aimed at making marijuana an FDA-approved pharmaceutical. Despite Attorney General Holder's decree to respect state medical marijuana laws, Cal NORML continues to receive reports of patients who are harassed and prosecuted for medical marijuana, *e.g.*, at border inspections, in VA hospitals, in government jobs, and on federal property.

Most reprehensibly, the government has actively blocked efforts to promote research and development of medical marijuana for FDA approval. Overriding a decision by its own administrative law judge, the DEA blocked the licensing of a medical marijuana facility at the U. of Massachusetts, making FDA development impossible. Furthermore, the DEA and NIDA blocked a research project co-sponsored by ourselves, aimed at developing smokeless vaporizers to eliminate the risk of inhaling harmful and toxic chemicals from marijuana, by arbitrarily denying the application of a DEA-licensed laboratory to obtain 10 grams of

marijuana for an FDA-approved non-human investigational study. We accordingly strongly endorse SJR 14's call to "encourage advanced clinical research trials."

In August, 2002, a coalition of medical cannabis advocates including ourselves, filed a petition with the DEA to have marijuana rescheduled for medical use. We are still waiting for a response eight years later. We hope you will agree that this is an inexcusable delay given the ongoing problems caused by dysfunctional and obsolescent federal laws. The protracted conflict between federal and state law continues to be a source of undue confusion and frustration for patients, law enforcement, and the public alike. We therefore strongly urge you to support SJR 14.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Gieringer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dale" and last name "Gieringer" clearly distinguishable.

Dale Gieringer, Ph.D.
Director, California NORML
Co-author, Proposition 215