

# Will Trump Reschedule Cannabis? Industry Doubts Grow

## Trump Administration's Early Decisions Cast Doubt on Cannabis Rescheduling

President Donald Trump's decisions during his first 50 days in office, including key appointments to federal drug and health agencies, are raising doubts about the possibility of marijuana rescheduling under federal law. The process, initiated in October 2022 by former President Joe Biden, was put on indefinite hold in January and remains unresolved.

### Growing Concerns Over Stalled Rescheduling Process Leave Industry in Limbo

Concerns are growing in both political and corporate circles as the rescheduling process remains in limbo. Some hopeful voices still suggest the Trump administration may take action before the end of the year. However, skepticism persists, with many questioning whether the administration will proceed with downgrading marijuana from Schedule 1 to Schedule 3 of the Controlled Substances Act or abandon the effort altogether.

### State-Level Progress Contrasts With Federal Inaction on Cannabis Policy

Despite continued progress in individual states, federal marijuana policy reform remains elusive. Many industry leaders publicly express optimism while privately acknowledging that the tax relief associated with rescheduling may not materialize soon. Washington-based lobbying efforts continue, citing Trump's past endorsements of both adult-use legalization in Florida and federal rescheduling during his 2024 campaign as reasons to maintain pressure on policymakers.

### Increased Industry Access to White House Fails to Alleviate Uncertainty

The cannabis industry appears to have gained more access to the White House than in previous administrations, with executives from major cannabis companies attending Trump's inaugural events. However, doubts remain about whether this access will translate into policy changes. Many in the industry are increasingly concerned that rescheduling efforts may stall or result in an unfavorable outcome.

### Key Appointments and Policy Shifts Raise Alarm Among Cannabis Advocates

Recent appointments, such as Terrance Cole to lead the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), have intensified these concerns. Cole, a longtime DEA official and marijuana policy skeptic, previously served in Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin's administration, where cannabis regulations faced repeated setbacks. Additional concerns stem from the stance of new Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who has shifted from previous support for cannabis reform to a more cautious approach, deferring to the DEA on policy

decisions.

## **Regulatory Resistance and Bureaucratic Hurdles Could Prolong Federal Inaction**

Other developments indicate potential obstacles to rescheduling. The DEA has been accused of resisting recommendations from Health and Human Services that support marijuana's medical use, and some critics argue that recent hearings were structured to favor maintaining the status quo. These actions suggest that rescheduling may face significant bureaucratic resistance.

## **Advocates Push for Executive Action Amid Uncertain Administrative Path**

Despite these challenges, advocates continue to push for reform, arguing that the Trump administration has an opportunity to reverse what some see as regulatory overreach by the previous administration. There is speculation that Trump could bypass the lengthy administrative process by issuing an executive order to reschedule or remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act altogether. However, whether cannabis policy ranks high on the administration's agenda remains uncertain.

## **Congressional Action May Be Necessary to Achieve Meaningful Reform**

Legal experts and industry figures recognize that achieving meaningful cannabis reform may ultimately require congressional action. With multiple pressing global and domestic issues competing for attention, marijuana policy may not be prioritized by the administration or the Republican Party. For now, the future of federal cannabis rescheduling remains uncertain, leaving businesses and advocates in a prolonged state of anticipation.

Email: [info@cannabisriskmanager.com](mailto:info@cannabisriskmanager.com) | Phone: +415-226-4060

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