

# **Kentucky Gov Presses Trump to Reject Cannabis Block Bill**

## **Kentucky Governor Urges Trump to Reject Congressional Attempt to Block Marijuana Rescheduling Process Amid Federal Inaction**

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear is calling on former President Donald Trump to take a firm stance against new congressional efforts to halt the federal marijuana rescheduling process. In a letter sent this week, Beshear urged Trump to oppose a provision in a House appropriations bill that would prohibit the U.S. Department of Justice from using funds to change marijuana's classification under federal law.

Beshear framed the call to action as a matter of integrity and follow-through, reminding Trump of his past public support for rescheduling cannabis to a Schedule III substance. The governor emphasized that Trump's commitment during his 2024 presidential campaign to promote medical research and reform should be honored now that the issue is actively under review.

### **Governor Warns That Interference in the Rescheduling Process Undermines Public Trust and Scientific Integrity**

The rescheduling proposal, currently under review by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), would move marijuana from the most restrictive Schedule I category—alongside drugs like heroin—to the less severe Schedule III tier, which includes substances with accepted medical uses. Beshear stressed that this process must proceed without political interference.

He argued that the proposed House language represents an attempt to circumvent the work of scientific and medical experts. According to Beshear, blocking the rescheduling now would send the wrong message to the American public and disregard the overwhelming bipartisan support for cannabis reform, particularly in states like Kentucky that have already legalized medical marijuana.

### **Kentucky's Recent Legalization of Medical Cannabis Underscores Growing Bipartisan Consensus**

Kentucky has emerged as a notable example of state-level cannabis reform in a traditionally conservative region. In 2023, the Kentucky General Assembly—dominated by a Republican supermajority—passed legislation to legalize medical marijuana. The bill was signed into law by Beshear, further cementing the state's commitment to recognizing cannabis as a valid treatment option.

Beshear pointed out that the success of this legislation in Kentucky reflects the changing public and political attitude toward marijuana. He noted that the momentum behind rescheduling has been building for years, with over 40 states now allowing some form of medical cannabis use.

## **Congressional Provision Would Strip DEA of Authority to Complete Marijuana Rescheduling Review**

At the heart of Beshear's concern is a specific clause embedded within a recent House Appropriations Committee bill. The provision—Section 607—would ban the DOJ from using federal funds to reschedule or remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act's classification system.

The language reads:

“None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to reschedule marijuana... or to remove marijuana from the schedules established under [the Controlled Substances Act].”

Beshear warned that this provision would not only halt progress but also undermine the legitimacy of the DEA's current review. The agency began formally reviewing the rescheduling proposal following a recommendation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2023.

## **Rescheduling Review Still Stalled as DEA Faces Leadership Transition and Internal Delays**

While the rescheduling process remains officially active, it has encountered multiple delays. Earlier this year, DEA Administrative Law Judge John Mulrooney paused hearings on the rescheduling effort. In a recent development, Mulrooney announced that he will be retiring by the end of this month, leaving the issue unresolved and in the hands of newly confirmed DEA Administrator Terrance Cole.

Cole, whose nomination was advanced by the Senate in May, has yet to take a public stance on the matter. During his confirmation process, he voiced concerns about marijuana's health impacts, particularly its use among young people, and stopped short of committing to any specific policy direction.

Cole told senators he would evaluate the issue carefully after consulting with internal DEA personnel and reviewing all available information. However, this noncommittal stance has added to uncertainty about whether the agency will act on the HHS recommendation or be stalled indefinitely.

## **Federal Inertia Contrasts With State-Level Progress and Public Sentiment Favoring Reform**

Beshear emphasized that the time for federal action is now. With strong public support, growing medical research, and clear momentum at the state level, he argued that the federal government is falling behind.

He cited the recent cultivation of the first legal medical cannabis inventory in Kentucky as a “milestone” in the state's rollout of its new medical marijuana program. Licensed growers have started operations, and the governor anticipates that patients will be able to access cannabis products before the end of the year.

This forward motion at the state level stands in sharp contrast to what Beshear describes as political obstruction in Washington. His letter to Trump positions the former president as a potential ally who could urge congressional Republicans to remove the rescheduling-blocking language from the appropriations bill.

## **Kentucky's Message to Washington: Follow Through on Cannabis Reform and Let the Science Lead**

As the national conversation around cannabis reform evolves, Beshear's message is clear: rescheduling is not only a matter of policy—it is a matter of keeping promises to the American people. He called on Trump to help ensure that the federal government does not undercut ongoing efforts rooted in science, public health,

and bipartisan support.

The DEA's review may still be in limbo, but pressure is mounting from states like Kentucky, where cannabis is no longer a fringe issue, it's public policy.

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