

# Medical Community Advocates Regulation of Intoxicating Hemp Cannabinoids

**Medical professionals championing drug policy reform demand regulation of hemp-derived intoxicating cannabinoids.**

A professional organization of physicians who support drug policy reform is calling for the regulation of intoxicating hemp-derived cannabinoids including delta-8 THC, arguing that the safety of products containing the compound is unknown. The recommendation was recently made by Doctors for Drug Policy Reform (D4DPR), a group of healthcare professionals formerly known as Doctors for Cannabis Regulation.

## **Legalization Lapses and the Rise of Intoxicating Cannabinoids**

In a policy paper released this month, D4DPR highlighted the unintended consequences of the 2018 Farm Bill, which legalized hemp but failed to regulate the chemical conversion of hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD) and other phytocannabinoids into intoxicating minor cannabinoids like delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol ( $\delta$ -8-THC). This regulatory gap has led to the proliferation of unregulated products containing intoxicating compounds in various retail outlets and online platforms.

## **Addressing the Regulatory Gap**

To address the issue, D4DPR urged policymakers to develop and enact a regulatory framework for all intoxicating cannabinoids, irrespective of their source. The group proposed recommendations including the sale of intoxicating compounds only through licensed dispensaries, appropriate taxation to fund public health initiatives, and regulatory oversight of the cannabinoid market.

## **Protecting Public Health**

D4DPR's recommendations also emphasized the importance of restricting sales of intoxicating cannabinoids to adults aged 21 and older, ensuring child-resistant packaging, and providing clear labeling about the intoxicating effects of the products. Additionally, the group advocated for mandatory lab testing of intoxicating cannabinoid products for purity, potency, and safety, along with research into their clinical safety and toxicology.

## **Harmonizing Regulations and Federal Rescheduling**

The organization called for alignment of regulations for intoxicating cannabinoids with those in states with medical marijuana or adult-use cannabis programs and urged states without regulations to develop them promptly. Moreover, D4DPR emphasized the need for federal rescheduling of cannabis, warning against a ban on intoxicating or minor cannabinoids that could perpetuate negative outcomes on public health.

## **Conclusion: Safeguarding Public Health Through Responsible Regulation**

In conclusion, the policy paper from D4DPR underscores the critical importance of regulating intoxicating hemp-derived cannabinoids to safeguard public health while ensuring reasonable access to cannabis- and hemp-derived products within a responsible regulatory framework.

### **Joining the Call for Regulation**

The policy paper from D4DPR joins a chorus of calls to regulate intoxicating cannabinoids. Last month, 21 state attorneys general sent a letter to congressional leaders urging them to address the regulatory gaps created by the 2018 Farm Bill, highlighting the need for immediate action to rein in the unregulated market of intoxicating cannabinoid products.

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