

Progress on Paper: Assessing DEA's Move Towards Justice

This week, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has reportedly called for cannabis to be reclassified from Schedule I to Schedule III of the US Controlled Substances Act. This was the first time in history the DEA announced such a move, and it came about eight months after the Department of Health and Human Services requested marijuana reclassification.

A Significant Shift

Cannabis, currently in the same class of substances as heroin, LSD, meth, and ecstasy, is considered to have no accepted medical value and a high abuse potential under Schedule I. Placing it in the Schedule III category would align it with substances like ketamine, anabolic steroids, and testosterone, indicating a shift in federal perception of its risk.

Implications for Businesses and Consumers

Rescheduling would reduce obstacles faced by businesses and consumers. It could potentially provide tax relief regarding IRS code 280E, which currently prohibits the marijuana industry from taking federal deductions, as noted by Michael Rosenblum, a partner at Thompson Coburn LLP.

Progress But Not Justice

However, organizations like the Last Prisoner Project (LPP) argue that rescheduling alone does not address the core issues of justice reform. LPP stated that while it signals a reevaluation of cannabis, it does not lead to the release of incarcerated individuals or alleviate the burdens faced by those affected by the carceral system. The 420 Unity Day of Action held on April 18th, 2024, organized by LPP, aimed to urge Congress and the President to take further action beyond rescheduling.

Strategies for Advancing Justice Reform

LPP suggests broadening the scope of Biden's cannabis clemency action, working with Congress and administrative agencies to provide retroactive relief, reducing prospective cannabis criminal enforcement, and incentivizing states to offer broad retroactive relief, especially in states with legal cannabis markets.

Ending the War on Medical Marijuana Patients

The American Cannabis Collective (ACC) sees the DEA's decision as a pivotal moment, particularly for medical marijuana patients. While acknowledging the victory, the ACC emphasizes that moving cannabis to Schedule III does not signify the end of prohibition. It urges continued efforts to ensure all patients have access to relief and to address the injustices of the war on drugs.

Moving Forward

While the DEA's proposal represents a significant step towards cannabis reform, it's essential to recognize that it is just one piece of the puzzle. True justice reform requires comprehensive action addressing the broader societal impacts of cannabis prohibition. As advocates continue their efforts, it's crucial to maintain momentum and push for meaningful change on multiple fronts.

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +855-507-2622

© Copyright 2025 Cannabis Risk Manager. All Rights Reserved