

DEA's Doubts: Cannabis Medical Value Under Scrutiny Despite Rescheduling Proposal

In a notable contrast to recent federal acknowledgments of marijuana's medical potential, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) released a report last Thursday that appears to cast doubt on the legitimacy of state medical cannabis programs.

Federal Rescheduling Announcement

Just last week, the federal government announced its agreement with a Department of Health and Human Services recommendation to move cannabis to Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act, recognizing its accepted medical use in the U.S.

DEA's Annual Report

However, the DEA's annual National Drug Threat Assessment, released shortly after, seems to challenge the credibility of state-level cannabis initiatives by placing scare quotes around terms like "legalized" and "medical" when referring to state marijuana laws.

DEA Administrator's Statement

DEA Administrator Anne Milgram emphasized the agency's focus on synthetic substances like fentanyl and methamphetamine, attributing the country's current drug crisis largely to international cartels.

Drug-Related Deaths

The report underscores the severity of the crisis, citing staggering statistics that reveal synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl, as the primary culprits behind approximately 70% of drug-related deaths in 2022.

DEA's View on Marijuana

Despite the DEA's emphasis on synthetic drugs, the report touches on cannabis-related issues, including the black market for marijuana, primarily supplied by Mexican cartels and organized crime groups.

Shift in Marijuana Seizures

Interestingly, federal data from 2023 show a significant decline in marijuana seizures at the U.S.–Mexico border, challenging the narrative of rampant marijuana trafficking portrayed in the report.

Focus on Synthetic Substances

DEA's budget submission to Congress underscores its focus on synthetic substances like fentanyl, with marijuana and psilocybin mentioned only briefly in the context of federally approved research.

Concerns Over THC Levels

The report also raises concerns about the increasing potency of marijuana, particularly THC levels, and the potential risks associated with edibles, especially for children.

Environmental Impact of Illegal Grows

Furthermore, the DEA highlights the environmental hazards posed by illegal marijuana cultivation, citing damage to wildlife, surrounding plants, and water supplies.

Silence on Psychedelics

While the report briefly acknowledges psychedelics, it predominantly focuses on synthetic drugs, leaving psychedelics largely unaddressed despite ongoing discussions at state and federal levels regarding their therapeutic potential.

DEA's annual assessment presents a complex picture of the drug landscape in the United States, emphasizing synthetic substances while raising questions about the efficacy and impact of state medical marijuana programs, despite recent federal acknowledgments of marijuana's medical value.

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +415-226-4060

© Copyright 2025 Cannabis Risk Manager. All Rights Reserved