



GAVIN NEWSOM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

February 24, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

Marijuana has been grown, cultivated, sold, and consumed for centuries – it is not new. But through our draconian and prohibitionist policies, we have outsourced much of this industry to an illicit market of criminals and drug cartels who have no regard for public safety and public health, especially as it relates to our children.

The War on Marijuana has failed. It did not, and will not, keep marijuana out of kids' hands. A 2014 National Institute on Drug Abuse study showed that, despite cannabis' classification by the federal government as a Schedule 1 illegal substance, 34-percent of 10th graders had used cannabis – making the substance more prevalent among this age group than the highly regulated and legal tobacco industry (23 percent).

Protecting youth and promoting public health and safety is paramount. We can't continue to keep doing what we've done and expect a different result. A tightly regulated marketplace for adult recreational marijuana use is a new and better approach. California's legal marketplace will include strict regulations on the business of cultivation, distribution, and retail, a "seed-to-sale" tracking system, rigorous laboratory testing of the product, and strict packaging requirements.

Creating a legal and tightly regulated recreational marijuana marketplace has massive public support. Voters recognize that policies of the past have failed us, and have approved this new approach up and down the entire western U.S. coast. Last November, nearly eight million Californians voted to legalize recreational marijuana in our state. A Quinnipiac poll released yesterday says that 71-percent of US voters says that the government should not interfere with states that passed legalized marijuana and during your campaign, you committed to honoring states' rights when it comes to marijuana legalization.

The government must not strip the legal and publicly-supported industry of its business, and hand it back to drug cartels and criminals. Dealers don't card kids. I urge you and your administration to work in partnership with California and the other eight states that have legalized recreational marijuana for adult use in a way that will let us enforce our state laws that

protects the public and our children, while targeting the bad actors. We have a shared goal of reducing crime, and the best way we can achieve that is through a tightly regulated market. Finally, with regard to your Press Secretary's grossly misinformed comments, marijuana is nothing like an opioid and there is no scientific evidence that marijuana use increases the use of opioids. Unlike marijuana, opioids represent an addictive and harmful substance, and I would welcome your administration's focused efforts on tackling this particular public health crisis.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Lieutenant Governor of California

cc: U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions