



FRIENDS of NIDA

May 2, 2019

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz
United States Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Feinstein, Grassley, and Schatz:

The undersigned national organizations applaud your initiative to reduce regulatory burden and facilitate further research on marijuana and its constituent compounds. The newly introduced Cannabidiol and Marijuana Research Expansion Act would enable the expansion of the scientific research base on marijuana to answer critical questions, such as identifying potential therapeutic effects and possible public health consequences.

Through a number of sensible changes, this proposed legislation would greatly reduce the current obstacles to Schedule I registration and related review procedures. The bill improves interagency efficiency by requiring the Department of Justice (DoJ) to approve applications for registration to conduct research on marijuana if researchers' protocols have already been reviewed and allowed by other federal science agencies and adequate security measures are in place to prevent abuse and diversion. The process is further expedited by the requirement that the DoJ either approve the application or request supplement information within 60 days. Additionally, processes to request an increase in the quantity of the substance being used for an approved research protocol is both simplified and expedited by instituting a 30-day review period.

Should this bill be enacted, it would enable the expansion of research on marijuana and its constituent compounds by allowing qualified scientists to use their existing registrations to conduct research and clinical trials and by authorizing medical and osteopathic schools, research universities, and pharmaceutical companies to manufacture their own marijuana to conduct research. Allowing institutes properly registered with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to import marijuana, marijuana seeds, or CBD for medical research purposes eliminates yet another barrier. Together, these provisions greatly reduce the existing obstacles to the cannabinoid medication development.

Thank you for introducing the Cannabidiol and Marijuana Research Expansion Act. Our organizations represent a range of scientific, professional, patient, provider, and advocacy groups which may differ on policies related to the legal status of marijuana, but are united in their support of scientific research. We recognize the growing need to understand the basic pharmacology and potential therapeutic benefits of cannabinoids as well as any deleterious effects. We are eager to assist in any way we can as this bill receives further consideration.

William L. Dewey
Friends of NIDA
Post Office Box 980613
Richmond, VA 23298-0613
wdewey@vcu.edu
804.827.0375

Board of Scientific Advisors

Dr. Peter Bourne
Dr. Robert DuPont
Dr. Loretta Finnegan
Dr. Jerome Jaffe
Hon. Patrick Kennedy
Dr. Alan Leshner
Dr. Bertha Madras
Gen. Barry McCaffrey, USA (Ret.)
Dr. A. Thomas McLellan
Dr. Kevin A. Sabet
Dr. Charles O'Brien

Executive Committee

William Dewey (Chair)
*College on Problems of
Drug Dependence*

Marie Dyak
*Entertainment Industries
Council, Inc.*

Gabrielle de la Gueronniere
Legal Action Center

Penny Mills
*American Society of
Addiction Medicine*

Robert Morrison
*National Association of State
Alcohol/Drug Abuse Directors*

Geoffrey Mumford
American Psychological Association

Charles O'Keeffe
*Virginia Commonwealth
University*

Andrew Kessler
Slingshot Solutions

Richard Rosenthal
*American Academy of
Addiction Psychiatry*

Marcia Lee Taylor
*Partnership for a
Drug-free America*

Sue Thau
*Community Anti-Drug
Coalitions of America*

Frank J. Vocci
*Friends Research
Institute, Inc.*

Sincerely,

American Academy of Neurology
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American College of Neuropsychopharmacology
American Pain Society
American Psychological Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation
College on Problems of Drug Dependence
Entertainment Industries Council
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
Friends of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse
Friends Research Institute
International Essential Tremor Foundation
Medical College of Wisconsin
Patrick Risha CTE Awareness Foundation
Society for Prevention Research
Treatment Communities of America