

It is Time for the Federal Government to Provide Safe Access to Medical Marijuana

The Facts Are In:

- In March 1999, the **National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine** concluded "there are some limited circumstances in which we recommend smoking marijuana for medical purposes." The report noted, "Nausea, appetite loss, pain and anxiety ... all can be mitigated by marijuana." Janet E. Joy, Stanley J. Watson, Jr., and John A Benson, Jr., "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Research, Institute of Medicine (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).
- "Federal authorities should rescind their prohibition of the medicinal use of marijuana for seriously ill patients and allow physicians to decide which patients to treat." Editorial, **New England Journal of Medicine**, January 30, 1997.
- Among the organizations that have endorsed medical access to marijuana are: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Bar Association; American Public Health Association; American Society of Addiction Medicine; AIDS Action Council; British Medical Association; California Academy of Family Physicians; California Medical Association; California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church; Consumer Reports Magazine; Institute of Medicine; Kaiser Permanente; Lymphoma Foundation of America; Multiple Sclerosis California Action Network; National Association of Attorneys General; National Association of People with AIDS; National Nurses Society on Addictions; New Mexico Nurses Association.

The Public Has Spoken:

- Between 1996 and 2000, seven states passed voter initiatives legalizing the medicinal use of cannabis (AZ, CA, ME, OR, WA, NV and AK). These states encompass 20 percent of the population.
- Every time US citizens have voted on medical marijuana they have voted for medical marijuana; support has ranged from 54 to 65 percent.
- A nationwide Gallup poll taken on March 19-21, 1999, found that 73% of American adults are for "making marijuana legally available for doctors to prescribe in order to reduce pain and suffering."

The federal government should stop treating seriously ill Americans as criminals.

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