



November 11, 2020

President-elect Biden,

Congratulations on being elected the 46th President of the United States. Tens of millions of voters cast votes in favor of your Presidency. Additionally, this year, millions of voters also cast votes resoundingly approving multiple statewide ballot measures legalizing and regulating the possession, use, and commercial sale of marijuana for adults. These voters represent a broad and diverse swath of the American electorate, with voters in deep “red” states (Arizona, Montana, and South Dakota) joining with voters in New Jersey, a “blue” state, to enact legalization. Voters in Mississippi and South Dakota also approved ballot measures approving medical marijuana access.

These election results once again affirm that marijuana legalization is a uniquely popular issue that is favored by the majority of voters of all political persuasions — with majorities of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans consistently endorsing legalization in national polls. The results also continue a multi-decade long trend of marijuana’s success at the ballot box. Since 1996, voters have decided affirmatively on 35 separate ballot measures legalizing cannabis (22 legalizing medical marijuana and 13 legalizing adult use). Once these latest laws are enacted, one out of every three Americans will live in a jurisdiction where the adult use of marijuana is legal under state law.

Given this overwhelming public support, and given your campaign pledge to reform marijuana policies and to respect the legitimacy of state-specific marijuana laws, we are calling on you to appoint an Attorney General who will uphold these policies.

Americans deserve and demand an Attorney General who will respect the will of the people and who will let states determine their own marijuana policies, unfettered by the federal government and in accordance with America’s longstanding federalist principles. We demand an Attorney General who will direct US Attorneys not to interfere in, disrupt, or add unnecessary uncertainty to state-licensed marijuana markets. We demand an Attorney General who will marshal the resources of the Department of Justice to review and pardon those convicted of federal minor non-violent marijuana possession crimes. Finally, we demand an Attorney General who will acknowledge that the criminalization of marijuana and the stigmatization of those who consume it is a failed public policy that financially burdens taxpayers, encroaches upon civil liberties, engenders disrespect for the law and for law enforcement, and disproportionately impacts young adults and communities of color.

We urge you to keep the campaign promises made by you, as well as Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, and appoint an Attorney General who will facilitate necessary changes in marijuana policies and who will respect the decisions of those states that have already moved in this direction.

Sincerely,  
Erik Altieri,  
Executive Director  
NORML - The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

