

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 9, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

We write to request that in the final appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2018 you include language to prohibit funds from being used to support the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (Cannabis Eradication Program). Such language has received bipartisan support in the 114th and 115th Congresses.

Throughout the country, states are increasingly turning away from marijuana prohibition and enacting alternative policies to lower crime rates, free up limited law enforcement resources, and keep drugs out of the hands of children. To date, nine states and the District of Columbia have legalized recreational marijuana, and 29 states and the District of Columbia now allow marijuana for medical use. There has also been a great deal of movement on the science behind marijuana, and consequently, the marijuana policy landscape in Congress has shifted to more closely match the needs of the states we represent.

In 2015, by a voice vote, the House of Representatives passed House Amendment 296 to H.R. 2578, the Commerce, Justice, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016. This commonsense amendment targeted \$9 million dollars in the Cannabis Eradication Program in the DEA budget and redistributed it to three accounts that play a far more useful role in promoting the safety and economic prosperity of the American people: the Violence Against Women Act Youth-Oriented Program, the Victims of Child Abuse program, and the Spending Reduction Account.

Last year, many of us introduced a similar amendment to H.R. 3354, the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018. The amendment again reduced funding for the DEA by \$9 million to eliminate the Cannabis Eradication Program, but the savings were directed to deficit reduction. Consequently, the Congressional Budget Office scored the amendment as reducing budget authority by \$9 million and reducing outlays by \$7 million in Fiscal Year 2018.

Despite both the Cannabis Eradication Program's proven ineffectiveness and the seismic shift in attitudes on marijuana policy within Congress and across our nation, the DEA continues to spend

millions of taxpayer dollars on this program, spending \$22 million in 2015 alone. There is no justification for spending this kind of money on an antiquated program never shown to be effective.

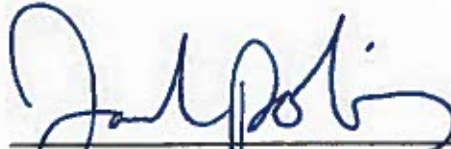
We urge you to include the substance of the aforementioned amendments to reduce funding for the Cannabis Eradication Program in any upcoming omnibus spending bill. This is a reasonable and measured spending reduction, in line with previous congressional action. The language, supported by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of Congress, is an important and needed step forward to cut waste from our federal budget.

Thank you for your consideration, and we hope you will support this request.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



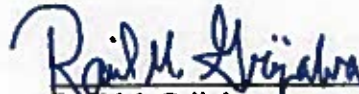
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



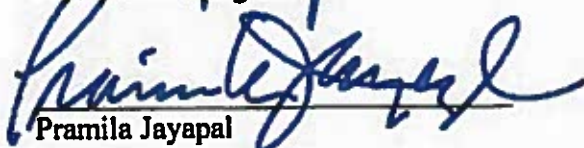
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Don Young
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



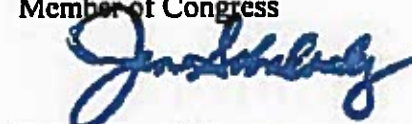
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



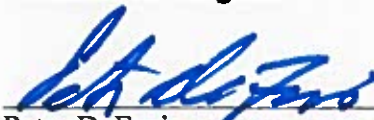
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress