

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 10, 2020

Dear Colleague:

One of the biggest winners of the 2020 election was cannabis reform. Americans in five very different states voted overwhelmingly to liberalize their cannabis policies, and it is clearer than ever that the American people are demanding a change to outdated cannabis laws. **There's no question: cannabis prohibition will end soon. We should lead the way by passing H.R.3884 - Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act.**

Last week's results reaffirm the strong bipartisan support to reform our failed cannabis prohibition. Even in states where Republicans easily swept elections, like in Mississippi and South Dakota, cannabis-related ballot measures passed with strong support. The success in Arizona, Montana, Mississippi, New Jersey and South Dakota means that cannabis will be legal for adult use in 15 states and medical use in 36 states. More than 109 million people will live in states where cannabis is legal for adults to use, that is more than one in three Americans. **In total, almost 99% of Americans will live in states with some form of legal cannabis.** We cannot ignore the will of the people any longer.

This comes as no surprise—national support for federal cannabis legalization is at an all-time high, and trends show that support will continue to grow. Polling from the Pew Research Center shows that 67% of registered voters think “the use of cannabis should be made legal,” and the Center for American Progress found that 73% support expunging the records of those previously convicted of cannabis-related offenses. This finding is confirmed by the fact that in the last three elections, 16 of the 18 pro-cannabis reform ballot initiatives were successful—even in places like Utah and Mississippi.

This past election further demonstrated that cannabis reform is popular, non-partisan, and the just thing to do as states have also made clear their commitment to restorative justice. Montana, which ranks first in the country for having the largest racial disparities for cannabis arrests will allow an individual currently serving a sentence for a prior low-level cannabis offense to apply for resentencing or an expungement of the conviction.

The recent success of cannabis reform in states around the country should give us a new sense of urgency to ensure Congress catches up with the American people. This is a critical issue of racial justice, and the failed war on drugs has devastated communities of color, especially Black and Brown communities. We can no longer ignore our duty to repair the damage that this harmful form of systemic racism has done.

The House was poised to vote on the MORE Act, the most comprehensive federal cannabis reform legislation we've ever seen, back in September. As the House kept our focus on providing struggling Americans with relief from COVID-19, we received commitment from our Caucus leadership that Congress would take steps to end the failed war on drugs by voting on the MORE Act before the year was over.

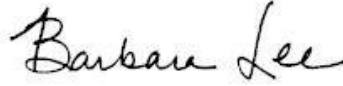
We have an opportunity and duty to correct course now. **As we head into the lame-duck session, we must remember the promise we made to the American people to pass the MORE Act.**

Thank you for your urgency.

Courage,



Earl Blumenauer
House Cannabis Caucus Co-Chair



Barbara Lee
House Cannabis Caucus Co-Chair