



Latino Cannabis Alliance Statement in Support of the Senate's Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA)

The Latino Cannabis Alliance proudly supports the reintroduction of the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA) in the U.S. Senate and urges Congress to finally end the failed policy of federal marijuana prohibition.

For decades, the War on Drugs has disproportionately harmed Latino, Black, Indigenous, and other underserved communities through over-criminalization, barriers to economic opportunity, and lasting collateral consequences. While the ongoing effort to reschedule cannabis represents meaningful progress, rescheduling alone does not end federal prohibition or eliminate the criminal penalties and inequities that continue to impact millions of Americans.

The Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act provides the comprehensive federal framework necessary to modernize cannabis policy. By removing marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act, the legislation empowers states to determine their own cannabis laws while establishing federal standards that protect public health, promote consumer safety, encourage scientific research, strengthen workers' rights, and provide legitimate businesses with access to banking and financial services.

Equally important, the CAO A recognizes that legalization must include justice. The bill would automatically expunge eligible federal marijuana convictions, provide opportunities for resentencing, protect noncitizens from immigration consequences related to lawful cannabis activity, prohibit discrimination in access to federal benefits, reinvest marijuana revenue back into communities most harmed by the War on Drugs, and expand opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to participate in the legal cannabis industry.

For Latino communities, meaningful cannabis reform must extend beyond legalization. It must create pathways for economic mobility, remove barriers created by decades of failed prohibition, protect immigrant families from unnecessary collateral consequences, and ensure that the benefits of legalization are shared equitably.

The Latino Cannabis Alliance applauds Senators Cory Booker, Chuck Schumer, and Ron Wyden for their continued leadership on federal marijuana reform and urges Congress to advance the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act. Federal cannabis policy should reflect the values of equity, public safety, economic opportunity, and justice, while finally bringing federal law in line with the overwhelming majority of Americans who support cannabis legalization.

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