

**Letter from the Directors of the Office of National Drug Control Policy  
1989-2008**

September 17, 2012

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President

As former Directors of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, we are writing to express our deep concern about efforts this November that would legalize marijuana in three states. Amendment 64 in Colorado, Measure 80 in Oregon, and Initiative 502 in Washington would legalize the production, possession and sale of marijuana, and in some cases industrial hemp, in direct violation of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). The CSA itself states specifically that if a conflict with state law exists, the CSA takes precedence. Given the language of these three initiatives, in which case state governments would be collecting tax dollars on the use of a controlled substance, a clear violation of federal law exists.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, the United States would be in clear and direct violation of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) and other international treaties ratified by Congress.<sup>2</sup>The consequences of this violation could be a United Nations sanction whereby the United States could see its export or import of controlled substances for medical and scientific research purposes stopped. The United Nations has followed closely the evolution of drug policy in this regard.<sup>3</sup>

We are strongly encouraged by your Administration's position against drug legalization generally, as laid out in your inaugural *National Drug Control Strategy* (2010).

But we are concerned that the non-discussion of current marijuana legalization efforts, specifically Amendment 64 in Colorado, Initiative 502 in Washington, and Measure 80 in Oregon, is sending a message that you and your Administration are indifferent to the legalization issue.

We stand united against any efforts, as seen with the above-referenced ballot initiatives, to legalize marijuana or any other currently illegal substances and urge you to respond to this letter expressing unequivocal opposition to marijuana legalization generally and these

---

<sup>1</sup> 21 U.S.C. 903 Pub. L. 91-513, title II, Sec. 709, Oct. 27, 1970, 84 State 1284.

<sup>2</sup> Article 4 (c), Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, and Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971.

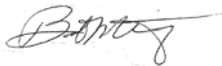
<sup>3</sup> See INCB: US Supreme Court Decision on Cannabis Upholds International Law (2005).  
[http://www.incb.org/incb/press\\_release\\_2005-06-08\\_1.html](http://www.incb.org/incb/press_release_2005-06-08_1.html)

initiatives specifically. We offer our help in standing with you and your senior officials in this important task. Your staff can reach all of us through Mrs. Calvina Fay, Executive Director, Drug Free America Foundation, Inc., 5999 Central Avenue, Suite 301, St. Petersburg, Florida 33710, who has coordinated this correspondence for us. As you know, action must be taken quickly to meet this danger.

Respectfully,



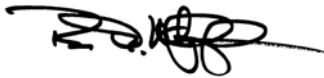
William Bennett



Robert Martinez



Lee P. Brown



Gen. Barry McCaffrey (Ret.)



John P. Walters

cc: The Honorable Eric Holder  
Attorney General of the United States  
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

The Honorable Cecilia Muñoz  
Executive Office of the President  
Domestic Policy Council  
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Executive Office of the President  
Office of National Drug Control Policy  
750 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Susan Rice  
Ambassador to the United Nations  
U.S. Mission to the United Nations  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017