

My name is Peter Bensinger and I have served as Administrator of DEA for 5 1/2 years during the Ford , Carter and Reagan Administrations. I'm speaking on behalf of all 9 former DEA Administrators who have served in both Democratic and Republican administrations. I am also acting as moderator for this teleconference.

Next month citizens in Colorado, Oregon, and Washington states will vote on legalizing marijuana. Federal law and the US Constitution and Supreme Court decisions say they can not do that.

There is a bigger danger that touches every one of us. Legalizing marijuana threatens our public health and safety.

In states that legalized "medical marijuana", drugged driving arrests, accidents and overdose deaths have skyrocketed. Drug treatment admissions are up, and the number of teens using this gateway drug is up dramatically.

More than a month ago, all former DEA administrators along with all former White House Drug Czars asked the Justice Department and the White House to inform states that they will face a constitutional showdown if voters legalize marijuana. The Attorney General did just that when California's Proposition 19 was on the ballot. That proposition would have legalized marijuana. Voters, realizing the real costs in health, crime and tax dollars, rejected the proposition.

Marijuana legalization is not about politics – it's about public health, public safety and about science and the law, Citizens need to understand the real costs and serious health and safety risks at stake.

On our call today are three experts in law enforcement, drug control policy, drug treatment, addiction and medicine. They will each speak for 2 minutes and then we welcome questions from the news media.

We also have on our telecon line several former DEA Administrators and leaders from national prevention, Faith based, legal, law enforcement, drug free workplace organizations and individuals in these fields in Colorado, Oregon and Washington, as well as Dr.

Robert DuPont, the first director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

END OF STATEMENT

Now I would like to turn to John Walters, former Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy representing all former Drug Czars from 1989 to 2008.

Now, we hear from the 2nd V.P. of the International Association of Chiefs of Police representing over 25,000 police chiefs. Chief Richard Beary .

Now, Dr Mitch Rosenthal, founding director of Phoenix House, an internationally respected leader in drug treatment who leads that organization headquartered in NYC..

Then questions for 5-10 minutes ... Then Dr. Robert DuPont , the founding Director of The National Institute on Drug Abuse and a spokesman for The American Society of Addiction Medicine will make concluding comments.

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CLOSING **** Thank you joining us on our teleconference. We hope the Justice Department will respond to our request. We will make a recording of this teleconference available at www.truecompassion.org later today and you can contact Lana Beck @ 727-828-0211 X 102 if you wish to interview any of us separately for your publications or programs.