



July 22, 2025

The Honorable Terrance Cole
Drug Enforcement Administration
Attn: Administrator
8701 Morrissette Drive
Springfield, Virginia 22152

Re: Implementing President Trump's Cannabis Policy Commitments

Dear Administrator Cole,

On behalf of the National Cannabis Industry Association (NCIA), I write to extend our sincere congratulations on your confirmation as Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Your leadership comes at a historic moment for federal drug policy, and we look forward to continuing to engage with the agency in support of policies that put public safety first while reflecting current science and the realities of the modern, state-regulated cannabis landscape.

Founded in 2010, NCIA is the oldest and largest trade association representing the legal cannabis industry. As a voice for hundreds of small and medium-sized businesses operating in full compliance with state laws, we advocate for a regulatory framework that promotes public health, consumer safety, and fair access to opportunity within this rapidly evolving industry.

Last year, we were honored to be designated by the DEA as one of the select participants in the agency's public hearing process for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to move cannabis from Schedule I to Schedule III under the Controlled Substances Act.

NCIA continues to believe that marijuana should not be subject to the Controlled Substances Act (CSA); rather, that marijuana products should be regulated under uniform product safety standards that apply equally to all licensed marijuana businesses and protect consumers across the country, developed under new federal law that recognizes that cannabinoid products cannot be governed under the same regulatory pathways that currently apply to pharmaceutical drugs, food, dietary supplements, alcohol, or tobacco.

However, our association recognizes that the DEA has only been considering the rescheduling of marijuana. We are eager and ready to work with the DEA and Trump Administration to, as you said during your confirmation hearing, “listen to the experts” and “follow the science,” which we are confident will lead to a change in marijuana’s status federally. The rescheduling process under the previous administration was unnecessarily protracted and fraught by allegations of malfeasance within DEA and we look forward to your renewed leadership to expedite this process and fulfill President Trump’s [campaign promise](#) to “unlock the medical uses of marijuana to a Schedule III drug” and ultimately “implement smart regulations, while providing access for adults, to safe, tested product”.

As such, we strongly encourage your office to continue advancing the cannabis rescheduling process in a timely and transparent manner. The recent recommendation by the Department of Health and Human Services to reclassify cannabis to Schedule III is grounded in the scientific, medical, and legal standards required by 21 U.S.C. § 811. Rescheduling would help eliminate unnecessary barriers to research, reduce burdens on legitimate businesses operating under state law, and bring federal policy more in line with overwhelming public opinion and decades of state-level reform.

As DEA considers next steps, we respectfully urge your administration to recognize the importance of collaboration with stakeholders who can offer real-world insights into the public health, enforcement, and operational impacts of federal cannabis policy. NCIA and our members welcome any opportunity to be constructive partners in that effort.

Thank you again, Administrator Cole. We wish you great success in your new role and look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,



Aaron Smith
Co-Founder & CEO
National Cannabis Industry Association (NCIA)

CC:

The Honorable Vince Haley, Director, White House Domestic Policy Council

The Honorable Pam Bondi, Attorney General of the United States