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Cannabis Legalization Advocates Announce Sept. 28 Rally at the U.S. Capitol

District of Columbia Marijuana Justice Condemns Congressional Inaction on Legalization

Activists Say It's Important that Peaceful, Non-Violent Gatherings Return to Capitol

WASHINGTON – Cannabis advocacy and education group District of Columbia Marijuana Justice (DCMJ) announced Tuesday that cannabis legalization activists will demonstrate peacefully Sept. 28 outside the U.S. Capitol to protest the failure by Congress and the White House to pass and enact meaningful and comprehensive criminal justice reforms, remove cannabis from the Schedule I list of outlawed federally controlled substances, and lift the congressional barriers blocking the District of Columbia from regulating cannabis.

Bolstered by unprecedented public support for legalization, and the growing number of states that continue to line up to legalize cannabis, the Sept. 28 free speech event is the first of several actions leading up to the 2022 midterm elections intended to spark lawmakers to finally get the federal government in line with the will of the American people. A whopping net 91% of Americans support either adult use or medical cannabis legalization, [according to a Pew Research Center poll taken in April](#). The District of Columbia and 19 states have legalized adult-use cannabis, while D.C. and 36 states have legalized medical cannabis.

“If foot-dragging and procrastination were Olympic sports, no doubt about it, Congress gets the Gold, hands down,” said DCMJ co-founder Adam Eidinger. “We appreciate the work of lawmakers who have decided enough is enough with the failed war on drugs propaganda campaign and are ready to legalize cannabis. However, it only takes a handful of key opponents to block legalization. What is taking Congress and the White House so long to get their act together and join the majority of Americans who just say yes to legalization? Are they so arrogant that they really think they know better than the majority of Americans?”

Cannabis legalization is a cornerstone for comprehensive criminal justice reform, including wiping the slate clean of past cannabis convictions with restorative justice measures, ending taxpayer-funded prison overcrowding by releasing non-violent cannabis users, and refocusing law enforcement resources on preventing violent crimes. Cannabis laws have been used as an unscrupulous tool in the racial profiling of Black, LatinX and Indigenous people.

“The fact is the obsolete and ill-conceived Controlled Substance Act passed by Congress more than 50 years ago has been a prime incentive for the creation and expansion of the illegal drug cartels,” said DCMJ co-founder Nikolas Schiller, who now heads sister group New York Marijuana Justice (NYMJ). “The longer it takes for Congress to legalize cannabis, the easier it is for the illegal, unregulated and untaxed sale of cannabis to flourish.”

Schiller added, “The congressional barrier blocking the District of Columbia from regulating cannabis, known as the Harris rider, is a perfect example of how Congress has been a windfall for the illegal sale of cannabis. Congress has aided and abetted underground operations to expand and go virtually undetected by denying the regulated sale of adult-use cannabis in D.C. by preventing a structure to be created for the

legal sale of adult-use cannabis, despite the voters of D.C. approving the creation of regulated adult-use cannabis. The Harris Rider must be removed once and for all.”

DCMJ, which has held several orderly, non-violent demonstrations outside the Capitol in the past, applied for a special event permit for the demonstration, but was informed by U.S. Capitol Police officials that such permits are not being issued at this time. Capitol Police suspended the issuing of permits after the violent Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol. DCMJ is moving forward with its plans to gather at the Capitol, but will keep the lines of communication open with Capitol Police ahead of the event. DCMJ has demonstrated peacefully in recent years outside the Capitol both with and without a permit.

“It is extremely important to normalize the working relationship between peaceful demonstrators, who are protected under the Constitution, and the Capitol Police, who without question were put under extreme duress by violent insurrectionists on Jan. 6,” Eiding said. “Like the vast majority of non-violent organizations that have gathered outside the Capitol in the past, our dispute is strictly with the policies enacted by Congress, or in the case of cannabis legalization, lack thereof. The Capitol Police have an important job to do and we respect that and we are grateful for their dedication.”

DCMJ is committed to the health and safety of all Americans. Event organizers will require participants to wear masks and urge those who plan to attend the demonstration to get vaccinated against COVID-19 before Sept. 28. “We laid down our marker on April 20th when we launched the ‘Joints for Jobs’ vaccination incentive project that has since moved to cities and states around the country,” Eiding said. “Any adult who showed us their proof of age and vaccination card on the 4/20 holiday received a free joint courtesy of legal craft cultivators in the District of Columbia, who donated their cannabis for the cause. It was a ‘thank you’ to those who have been vaccinated.”

ABOUT DC MARIJUANA JUSTICE Since its founding in 2013, DCMJ has led the nation in creative and high-profile cannabis reform activism. After introducing and passing DC’s Initiative 71 in 2014, which voters legalized the possession and cultivation of cannabis, DCMJ organized three large seed giveaways that provided all adults and Congressional staffers the means to grow cannabis for themselves, deployed giant 51-foot inflatable joints outside the Capitol, the White House, the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Times Square in New York City, the 2016 Presidential Debates, Annapolis Statehouse and Boston’s Freedom Rally, as well as distributing over 10,000 joints of District of Columbia homegrown cannabis at the Inauguration of President Donald Trump, and attempting to distribute 1,227 joints at the congressional “Joint Session” in 2017, where U.S. Capitol Police unlawfully arrested seven DCMJ activists (All charges were dropped the following day). In 2021, DCMJ conceptualized and launched the “Joints for Jobs” coronavirus vaccination incentive program that was spontaneously adopted around the U.S., including by the State of Washington. Also in 2021, DCMJ was behind The Great Commonwealth Cannabis Seed Share, collecting and distributing about 20,000 seeds on the first day of legal home craft cultivation in Virginia. In 2018, 2019, and 2021, aligned organizations MDMJ, VAMJ, COMJ, and NYMJ were formed to advocate for cannabis reform in Maryland, Virginia, Colorado, and New York. DCMJ demands cannabis be removed from the Controlled Substances Act and all Americans are given the right to grow cannabis in the safety and privacy of their homes.

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DCMJ video releases for media distribution:

Joints for Jobs 4/20/21 <https://twitter.com/i/status/1386326239326183432>

Joints for Jobs promo: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=248092560359325>

Great Commonwealth Cannabis Seed Share 1-7-21 (VA Legalization Day): https://fb.watch/7yYtQ7I_vT/

Great Commonwealth Cannabis Seed Share promo: <https://fb.watch/v/AoEyFkE4/>