

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

Marijuana - Let it grow for research.

Image from public domain. Three years ago, WMAL radio interviewed me opposite a doctor from the Office of National Drug Policy, about Maryland's then-newly effective law capping marijuana possession penalties at a \$100 fine plus court costs upon presentation of proof that it was for medical necessity. After the interview, a radio caller urged banning medical marijuana until studies sufficiently cleared it for safety. Aside from the absence of evidence that moderate marijuana smoking causes health problems any more serious than drinking alcohol (and probably less serious), another problem with such a position is that the federal government has consistently and severely limited the availability of lawfully grown marijuana to enable further research into the effectiveness and safety of medical marijuana. In fact, the United States government has only permitted the University of Mississippi to grow marijuana for clinical research. One more clinical marijuana grower will be added to the list if the Drug Enforcement Administration accepts the advisory ruling from February 12, 2007, of DEA Administrative Law Judge Mary Ellen Bittner (the full seventy-page ruling is [here](#)). ALJ Bittner determined that an insufficient supply of marijuana for medical research exists, and recommended the approval of the application of University of Massachusetts Professor Lyle E. Craker to grow such marijuana. Background on Professor Craker's effort to grow marijuana for research is [here](#) at the site for the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies. (Scroll to the bottom of MAPS' homepage for Dean Chamberlain's colorful portrait's of psychedelic pioneers.) The ball is now in the DEA's court about how to respond to ALJ Bittner's ruling. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Drugs at 00:00

Hi Thanks for reporting on MAPS' progress with medical marijuana research. I wanted to let you know that a press release issued by MAPS about the DEA ruling is located here: <http://www.maps.org/mmj/DEAlawsuit.html#favorable>.

This provides a good summary up Judge Bittner's recommendation.

Thanks again!

Anonymous on Feb 20 2007, 13:49