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MEDIA CONTACT
Miriam Krinsky
krinskym@krinsky.la
818-416-5218

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION LEADERS JOIN POLICYMAKERS IN CALLING ON CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE MORE ACT

New national polling data demonstrates widespread bipartisan support for ending federal criminalization of marijuana.

WASHINGTON – Today, law enforcement and criminal justice leaders joined Reps. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Barbara Lee (D-CA) to unveil new [national polling data](#) from Data for Progress, Fair and Just Prosecution, The Justice Collaborative Institute, and Law Enforcement Action Partnership showing bipartisan support for federal marijuana policy reform.

At a virtual press conference, these national leaders also discussed a [joint letter](#) released today and signed by 53 current and former law enforcement leaders and experts urging Congress to propel long overdue change and pass the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act ([H.R. 3884](#)). The MORE Act is the most comprehensive piece of marijuana reform legislation introduced to date and the only one firmly centered in reparative justice.

“In this moment of national reckoning over our history of racially-biased policing, millions of Americans from every corner of the country are demanding policy changes to protect Black lives and promote racial justice,” said **Baltimore City State’s Attorney Marilyn Mosby**. “Passing the MORE Act – which both eliminates a tool of racially disparate policing enforcement and directs resources to repair harmed communities – is one essential step.”

The national polling shows strong bipartisan support for marijuana reform and, in particular, the MORE Act. Keys finding include:

- 58% of likely voters, including 54% of Republicans, think that the federal government should **legalize the use and sale of marijuana**.
- 62% of likely voters, including 60% of Republicans, **support the MORE Act** when asked about its specific provisions.

- 63% of likely voters, including 59% of Republicans, believe that some tax funds from the sale of marijuana should go to **community reinvestment funds** to support the communities most harmed by punitive drug policy.

“There is no better time than now for passing the MORE Act,” says **Major Neill Franklin (Ret), executive director of the Law Enforcement Action Partnership**. “As we recognize the urgent need for dramatic police reform, ending the public policy of federal marijuana prohibition could immediately reduce the annual number of police-citizen contacts by several hundred thousand, which would translate into a significant decline in the use of force.”

“As this report shows, the American people want meaningful cannabis reform and equity in our cannabis laws. We need to put an end to the harmful impacts of the war on drugs and pass the MORE Act,” said **Congresswoman Barbara Lee**. “The legacy of the failed war on drugs not only threatens the health, safety, and economic security of Black Americans around the country, it feeds into the prison industrial complex, and is yet another extension of the systemic racism we are fighting every day to dismantle.”

“One of the most shameful episodes in criminal justice and race relations in our history has been the deliberate targeting of Black Americans for selective application of our marijuana laws,” **Congressman Earl Blumenauer** said. “As Americans cry out for change, we must meet this moment and end the senseless prohibition of cannabis that has been used to actively oppress Black Americans for too long. Passing the MORE Act will ensure restorative justice while helping to create the systematic changes needed in our criminal justice system.”

Low-level marijuana arrests are a significant driver of police contact and public mistrust in law enforcement. In 2018, police made more than [663,000](#) marijuana arrests – 92% of them for possession – consuming substantial resources that could otherwise be spent tackling serious crimes. And communities of color are disproportionately impacted by enforcement – despite similar rates of use across racial groups – resulting in far-reaching consequences affecting employment, housing, education, federal benefits and more.

“Prosecutors from across the country committed to a new vision for the justice system understand that marijuana criminalization harms public safety, devotes unnecessary limited resources to conduct that need not be part of the justice system, and exacerbates racial inequities. These concerns are particularly concerning during a deadly pandemic and at a time of fractured trust with communities,” says **Miriam Aroni Krinsky, executive director of Fair and Just Prosecution**. “The MORE Act will shrink the footprint of the justice system and reduce racial disparities, and it is not surprising that a majority of Americans support these reforms.”

“Two-thirds of Americans are ready for marijuana to be legal because they understand that policing low-level offenses like marijuana possession destroys the lives of good people without making anyone safer,” says **Lt. Nick Bucci (Ret.), New Jersey State Police**. “The MORE Act will help restore sanity to our justice system by freeing up resources to deal with real public safety threats. I urge House Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone, who hails from New Jersey, and other congressional leadership with the power to bring this important piece of legislation swiftly to the House floor for a vote to do so.”

The MORE Act would deschedule marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act and begin providing investment and resources to communities most impacted by marijuana prohibition. Allies are pushing for a House floor vote by September.

Ethan Winter, with the Data for Progress team, added, “Supporting the MORE Act shows leadership at a time when the public is calling for law enforcement leaders and policymakers to come together on concrete policy reforms that can have a real impact and close the gap in racial disparities in arrests. Giving marijuana the green light is, simply put, a political winner.”

Media who were unable to attend may contact akress@fairandjustprosecution.org to obtain a recording of the press conference.

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Data for Progress is a think tank that uses data to support progressive activists, candidates, and causes. To learn more about Data for Progress’s work, visit <https://www.dataforprogress.org> or follow us on Twitter [@DataProgress](https://twitter.com/DataProgress).

Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit www.fairandjustprosecution.org or follow us on Facebook [@FairAndJustProsecution](https://www.facebook.com/FairAndJustProsecution).

The Justice Collaborative Institute is home to a collection of the nation’s top scholars and thinkers bound together by a common mission to produce rigorous, practical research that contributes to an America with more dignity and freedom for all of us, starting with those who are the most vulnerable. They translate research into pragmatic resources for public officials, reporters, advocates, and other scholars, including polling memos, policy briefs, model laws and policies, and amicus briefs. To learn more about The Justice Collaborative Institute’s work, visit <https://tjcinstitute.com/>.

The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) is a nonprofit group of police, judges, prosecutors, and other criminal justice professionals who advance evidence-based public safety solutions. To learn more about LEAP’s work, visit www.lawenforcementactionpartnership.org or follow us on Facebook [@LawEnforcementAction](https://www.facebook.com/LawEnforcementAction).