



April 8, 2008

The Honorable John Conyers
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Conyers:

As you know, many property owners who lease to medical cannabis dispensaries across the State of California and San Francisco have received notices from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) threatening them with imprisonment and property forfeiture. I am writing to request your support in providing immediate oversight of the DEA's on-going interference with implementation of the law.

It has been many years since Proposition 215 was supported by the voters of California and added Section 11362.5 to the California Health and Safety Code, which exempts patients and defined caregivers who possess or cultivate marijuana for medical treatment recommended by a physician from criminal laws. Proposition 215 also provides that physicians who recommend use of marijuana for medical treatment shall not be punished or denied any right or privilege. San Francisco has systems for identifying patients.

As Mayor of a city with several medical cannabis dispensaries, I remain supportive of physician recommended medical marijuana to combat pain and nausea caused by such illnesses as HIV/AIDS, cancer and multiple sclerosis. Medical cannabis dispensaries provide patients with a safe, clean and compassionate environment for medical treatment and related services.

San Francisco recently passed a Resolution reaffirming that this city is a sanctuary for medical cannabis. Property owners who, pursuant to City regulations, lease space to authorized Medical Cannabis Dispensaries that provide needed services to qualified medical cannabis patients and their caregivers are protected.

Like many major cities San Francisco needs the assistance of the DEA in combating serious drug trafficking. However San Francisco strongly opposes Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) interference in medical cannabis dispensing and the recent issuing sensational threatening letters to these property owners threatening asset forfeiture and imprisonment.

I strongly urge the House Judiciary Committee to investigate the Drug Enforcement Agency's tactics against vital medical cannabis laws and to set a date for the opening of Congressional hearings on this matter.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom
Mayor, City & County of San Francisco