

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

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GOVERNOR



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January 9, 2018

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In 2015, Louisiana began the process of approving the sale and use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. Legislation signed into law by my predecessor, a Republican, and I moved this process towards completion and will have a positive impact on families all across Louisiana whose loved ones suffer from a variety of illnesses. This legislation, which passed with bipartisan support, gives many families all across our state hope for a better tomorrow.

Too often we get caught up in the politics of what goes on in state capitols and in Congress, and we don't reflect on how we have the ability to have a real, positive impact on the people of our states and this country. Access to medical marijuana is one of those issues. According to polling, 70 percent of the people in Louisiana support the legalization of medical marijuana.

Recent actions taken by Department of Justice (DOJ) jeopardize this treatment for those who need it in Louisiana and other states, and I am requesting your support in allowing states like Louisiana to offer marijuana as a form of medical treatment without the threat of federal prosecution. Under current law, a bipartisan amendment by Representatives Dana Rohrabacher and Earl Blumenauer prevents the federal government from expending funds to interfere with state medical marijuana laws. This language is included in the Continuing Resolution that is currently funding the federal government. However, that funding mechanism expires on January 19, 2018, and there appears to be an effort by the DOJ to eliminate that language. This exposes state actors and state-sanctioned agents to potential federal criminal liability despite their adherence to state law which was approved by our legislature and signed into law. If this were to take place, it would be devastating to so many men, women and children who are anxiously awaiting access to this treatment option.

President Donald J. Trump – Medical Marijuana

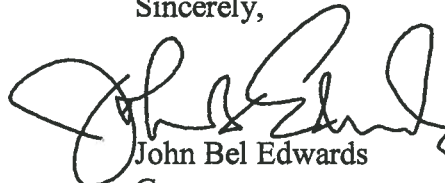
January 9, 2018

Page 2

Mr. President, for many people in my state, access to this treatment means a person could return to the workforce, return to school or simply lead a normal life. Simply put, we fail the people we represent if Congress moves a funding bill that does not include the Rohrabacher-Blumenauer language. This issue is critically important in Louisiana, and I hope we can partner together to ensure the safe distribution of this life-changing form of treatment.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: The Honorable Bill Cassidy
The Honorable John Kennedy
The Honorable Steve Scalise
The Honorable Cedric Richmond
The Honorable Clay Higgins
The Honorable Mike Johnson
The Honorable Ralph Abraham
The Honorable Garret Graves