

Veep Urges DEA to Reschedule Marijuana “As Quickly as Possible”

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In case you missed it, Fat Joe [visited](#) the White House late last week to discuss federal marijuana policy. 2024, man.

During a roundtable discussion with Mr. Joe (?), Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, and several individuals who have received pardons from President Joe Biden for prior federal marijuana convictions, Vice President Kamala Harris “urged the Drug Enforcement Administration to work as quickly as possible on its review of whether to reschedule marijuana as a less-dangerous drug.”

The vice president, in direct terms, stated that it was “absurd” and “patently unfair” to keep the drug in the same highly restrictive tier as heroin and fentanyl. “Nobody should have to go to jail for smoking weed,” Harris said, [according](#) to NPR, framing the issue of marijuana reform as a criminal justice issue that disproportionately hurts Black and Latino men.

As to timing, Harris reportedly [said](#): “I cannot emphasize enough that they need to get to it as quickly as possible, and we need to have a resolution based on their findings and their assessment.”

The vice president’s remarks follow Biden’s urging of marijuana rescheduling during the recent State of the Union. Biden has previously granted pardons for federal crimes of marijuana use and possession and has encouraged governors to do the same for state law convictions.

We previously [reported](#) that in October 2022 Biden ordered Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra “to initiate the administrative process to review expeditiously how marijuana is scheduled under federal law.” Last August, we [noted](#) that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services officially recommended to DEA that marijuana be moved from Schedule I to Schedule III under federal law.

Last Friday, Harris expressed urgency, concluding: “I’m sure DEA is working as quickly as possible and will continue to do so... And we look forward to the product of their work.”

On the one hand, you could be excused for believing this was simply an inconsequential meeting on a Friday during Spring Break without any chance for advancing the ball. I think, however, that it is meaningful to hear the sitting vice president unequivocally and in stark terms call for the prompt

rescheduling of marijuana and make the case that it would be unfair not to do so. In that sense, the marijuana industry has come a long way.

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