



TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

FROM: PAMELA LICHTY, MPH, PRESIDENT

HEARING DATE & TIME: APRIL 2, 2009

RE: HCR 165/HR 132 REQUESTING THAT THE FEDERAL DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION RECOGNIZE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S POSITION ON MEDICAL MARIJUANA RAIDS AND STOP ENGAGING IN MEDICAL MARIJUANA RAIDS THAT CIRCUMVENT STATE LAWS PERMITTING MEDICAL USE OF— **IN SUPPORT**

The Drug Policy Action Group is in strong support of HCR 165 and HR 132 - which should not even be necessary.

Developments are occurring very rapidly on this front as the Obama administration settles in. On February 25 of this year, Eric Holder, newly confirmed Attorney General, said in response to a question that the federal government would no longer be interfering with the 13 states which now have medical marijuana laws in place.

On March 19th he clarified the issue further saying that only when both state AND federal laws were violated would the federal government become involved. He further clarified that they would only go after cannabis dispensaries that were using medical dispensing as a "masquerade" for simple drug dealing.

These policy declarations unfortunately have not yet been formally issued. Nor apparently have they trickled down to the DEA administrator, who is a Bush administration holdover, and certainly not to the rank and file DEA agents. In fact on Feb. 25th, the very day that Holder made his most recent pronouncements, a DEA helicopter was hovering for some 40 minutes over the homes of registered patients on the Big Island and even landing in their neighbor's yard.

Then just last week, there were raids on some marijuana dispensaries in San Francisco who were registered with that city. They were accused of violating state tax laws yet there were only Federal agents involved in the raids.

In short, this resolution is still timely and necessary. We urge you to pass it out so

that the DEA gets the message from this medical marijuana state not to interfere with our state laws.

The Drug Policy Action Group is a sister organization to the Drug Policy Forum of Hawai`i. Since 1993 DPFH has been Hawaii's leading organization dedicated to promoting responsible, effective, and research-based drug policies.

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