



NORML[®]



[Home](#) > [ACTIVISM](#) > [House Marijuana Vote Delayed as the Senate Advances Veterans Access Amendment](#)

House Marijuana Vote Delayed as the Senate Advances Veterans Access Amendment

BY JUSTIN STREKAL, NORML POLITICAL DIRECTOR | AUGUST 5, 2021

Last week, the House of Representatives went into recess before taking up action on the FY-2022 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations package, which has historically contained protections for state-legal medical programs but in recent years, reformers have had increasing success in advancing efforts to expand those protections to adult-use programs as well.

Since 2014, members of Congress have passed this annual spending bill that has included a provision protecting those who engage in the state-sanctioned use and dispensing of medical cannabis from federal prosecution by the Department of Justice. The existing language now maintains that federal funds cannot be used to prevent states from “implementing their own state laws that authorize the use, distribution, possession or cultivation of medical marijuana.”

A measure is known as the Blumenauer-McClintock-Norton-Lee amendment, after Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D), and Barbara Lee (D) (co-Chairs of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus), Tom McClintock (R), and Eleanor Holmes Norton (D) was advanced to receive a vote by the House Rules Committee but the House did not take up CJS package or its amendments prior to breaking for recess.

The bipartisan Blumenauer-McClintock-Norton-Lee amendment removes the word “medical” from the current language – thereby extending these protections to both qualified patients and to adults, as well as to those licensed in both the medical and recreational industries.

The amendment has passed in the House in 2019 and 2020 but was removed by the Republican-controlled Senate.

This year, thousands of NORML members have sent messages to their lawmakers in support of this important change. [You can do so as well here.](#)

In other appropriations news this week, the Senate Appropriations Committee advanced a measure known as the veterans' equal access amendment, which would restrict the Department of Veterans Affairs from taking disciplinary actions against VA doctors solely for the act of issuing medical cannabis recommendations in a manner that is compliant with their state's laws.

Presently, V.A. doctors in states where cannabis therapy is permitted are forbidden from providing the paperwork necessary to complete a medical cannabis recommendation, thus forcing military veterans to seek the advice of a private, out-of-network physician.

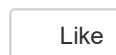
According to nationwide survey data conducted by The American Legion in 2017, 39 percent of respondents affirmed that they "know a veteran" who is using the plant medicinally. Twenty-two percent of respondents said they themselves "use cannabis to treat a mental or physical condition."

This amendment has been advanced multiple times in both chambers of Congress in previous years.

[NORML supporters can contact their lawmakers in favor of this policy change here.](#)

You can read NORML's FY2022 appropriations memo [here](#).

Like this:



Be the first to like this.

Related

Dozens of Congressional Leaders Sign Letter To Restrict DOJ Enforcement Of Prohibition

April 29, 2021
In "Appropriations"

Will the House of Representatives Let Jeff Sessions Shut Down Medical Marijuana?

June 29, 2017
In "Advocacy"

Upcoming Congressional House Vote on Marijuana Policy

July 24, 2021
In "ACTIVISM"

POSTED IN ACTIVISM