

Calif. Dems want Obama to back off pot enforcement

By Robin Wilkey, Huffington Post

SAN FRANCISCO – Marijuana may not be fully legal in California, but the state's Democratic Party has made its position clear.

In a resolution released on Sunday, the California Democratic Party requested that President Obama end the federal crackdown against states with marijuana laws on the books:

"The California Democratic Party requests: President Obama to allow the newly enacted marijuana legalization laws in Colorado and Washington to go into effect with no federal interference, and [...] end the Department of Justice interference and raids by federal agencies in states with medical marijuana laws."

The authors cited voter support for marijuana, the cost of enforcing prohibition laws and racially biased punishment as motivations for the resolution:

"18 states and the District of Columbia have passed laws legalizing the use of cannabis [...] and Colorado and Washington in 2012 passed laws legalizing the recreational use. [...]"

"The United States spends over \$20 billion a year enforcing marijuana prohibition laws, and thousands of people are murdered every year involving the smuggling of illegal drugs into the United States and marijuana accounts for over half of these illegal drugs [...]"

"Marijuana prohibition laws are racially enforced with a far larger percentage of African-Americans and Hispanics convicted and imprisoned for marijuana prohibition offenses than their

white counterparts even though marijuana use in their communities is no more than in white communities.”

The party also encouraged state legislators to establish parameters to guide cities and counties in the distribution of medical marijuana, and announced plans to begin a comprehensive study “to produce recommendations for reform of our nation’s marijuana prohibition laws.”

News of the resolution was applauded by marijuana reform advocates, including Marijuana Majority founder and chairman Tom Angell.

“In just the past few weeks, we’ve seen the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the *New York Times* editorial board and now the Democratic Party of our nation’s most populous state call on President Obama to finally follow through on his campaign promises to respect state marijuana laws,” Angell told the *Huffington Post*.

A recent survey released by the Partnership at Drugfree.org, one of the nation’s harshest critics of drug use, indicated that a strong majority of Americans support medical marijuana legalization, and nearly half support recreational use.

“Polls show that the American people support what candidate Obama pledged to do over what President Obama has actually done,” said Angell. “Now would be a good time for the president to start delivering on the changes he promised in 2008.”