

United States Senate

SENATE CAUCUS ON
INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 818-C
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell:

We are writing to follow up on a letter we sent in October of last year to the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Justice (DOJ) regarding regulations that govern research on marijuana, specifically on cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive compound derived from the marijuana plant and administered in the form of an oil (see attached).

HHS and DOJ provided conflicting responses to our letter. While HHS indicated a willingness to streamline the research approval process and that it is taking steps to do so, DOJ indicated a reluctance to amend *any* of its regulations. Therefore, we request that HHS work with DOJ to determine ways to remove any unnecessary barriers that stand in the way of research into the potential medical benefits of marijuana and CBD. In the meantime, so that we may better understand HHS' position, we request that you answer the questions attached to this letter.

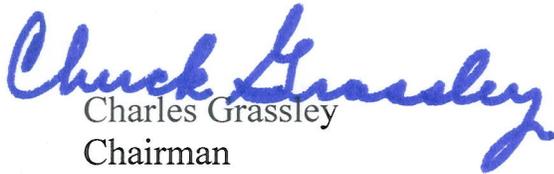
In addition, we request that HHS, in concert with DOJ, immediately evaluate the factors determinative of control or removal from schedules for CBD, and make a scheduling recommendation for it, as described in section 201(a) - (c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 811(a) - (c)).

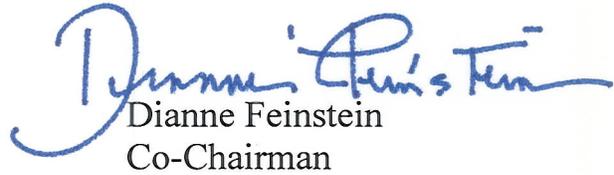
This request is based on the fact that a scientific and medical evaluation of CBD has never been conducted by the federal government, despite the growing anecdotal evidence that it may effectively treat intractable epilepsy in children. Many individuals across the country are suffering from serious medical

conditions that might be alleviated by CBD. It is therefore critical that this evaluation be completed so that it can be determined if CBD should be down-scheduled and used as medicine, or remain as currently scheduled.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these important requests. We respectfully request a response by June 5, 2015.

Sincerely,


Charles Grassley
Chairman


Dianne Feinstein
Co-Chairman

cc: Loretta Lynch, Attorney General, Department of Justice
Michele Leonhart, Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration
Stephen Ostroff, M.D., Acting Commissioner, Food and Drug
Administration

Enclosures

So that we may better understand HHS' position regarding marijuana research and existing regulations, we request that you answer the following questions:

1. What are the "unnecessary burdens that inhibit research and development" that the letter refers to? What solutions is HHS considering to reduce or eliminate them?
2. Why is marijuana the only Schedule I substance that is subject to a Public Health Service (PHS) review?
3. Does HHS believe there is a continued need for the PHS review? If so, why?
4. When does HHS expect to complete the internal review process described in its response, and will HHS report back to us what changes they plan to make?