

 			<h1>NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES</h1>			<a href="#">Members Log-in</a>
		<a href="#">Home</a> <a href="#">Press Room</a> <a href="#">Contact/Ask NCSL</a> <a href="#">Search</a> <a href="#">Site map</a>				
<a href="#">NCSL Profile</a>	<a href="#">Policy Issues</a>	<a href="#">State Legislatures</a>	<a href="#">State-Federal Relations</a>	<a href="#">Publications</a>	<a href="#">Meetings</a>	

December 26, 2000

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20500

## Re: Cultivation and Marketing of Industrial Hemp

Dear President Clinton:

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) supports flexible federal policies to allow states to determine the viability of industrial hemp. Eleven states have passed bills or resolutions supporting the re-introduction of this product into American agriculture. But, federal barriers to the cultivation and production of industrial hemp have effectively blocked these states from determining its viability and market potential.

Today, imported industrial hemp products are being sold legally and with profit in the United States, with an estimated \$50 million market. Industrial hemp has a multitude of commercial applications, and demand for these products has resulted in the U.S. becoming the largest importer of foreign-grown hemp-based materials in the world. Federal barriers have prevented American farmers from profiting from this agriculturally based international market.

NCSL strongly urges the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), the [Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\)](#) and the [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) to collaboratively develop and adopt an official definition of industrial hemp, as per those nations currently producing hemp. NCSL is also strongly urging Congress to amend U.S. Code sections 21 U.S.C. Sec. 812 (10) and 21 U.S.C. Sec. 841 to distinguish between industrial hemp and marijuana varieties of cannabis as they relate to production, possession, delivery and intended use.

NCSL requests the USDA and the DEA to review the procedures under which their Canadian counterparts are authorized to sanction the commercial development of industrial hemp. NCSL is also strongly urging Congress statutorily to direct the DEA to revise its policies to be less restrictive and to allow states to establish state regulatory programs, thus fostering the development of domestic hemp production by American farmers and manufacturers.

The National Conference of State Legislatures looks forward to working with you and your staff on this important issue. Should there be questions, please contact [Dave Naftzger](#) of the NCSL staff at 202-624-8662.

Sincerely,

Bill Friend

Indiana House of Representatives  
Chair, NCSL Agriculture and International Trade committee

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NCSL staff contacts: [David Naftzger](#), [Steve Smith](#)



[NCSL Agriculture and International Trade Committee](#)

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