



For Immediate Release
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Immigrant Defense Project Statement on the Passage of the MORE Act
IDP Celebrates House Passage of Legislation to End Federal Marijuana Prohibition

NEW YORK—Today the House of Representatives passed the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act, legislation that would deschedule and decriminalize cannabis, resentencing federal convictions, and take a major step toward ending collateral consequences for cannabis-related activity, including immigration consequences.

On the passage of the bill, Immigrant Defense Project's (IDP) Supervising Attorney Benita Jain said:

“For decades, IDP has fought for marijuana justice, including the end of prohibition in New York State passed last year. But action on the federal level is still urgently needed. Black and Latinx immigrant communities continue to be disproportionately targeted by ICE. They face detention and deportation based on cannabis-related activity, even in states where it is now legal. Today, the House took a long overdue step forward to ensure that immigrants are not left out of marijuana reform and provide equal access to the legal market. We urge the Senate to act quickly to follow suit.”

Marijuana prohibition has driven the disproportionate arrest rate of Black and Latinx people, the denial of countless green card applications, and the detention and deportation of countless immigrants. In New York, IDP, as a member of the START Smart Coalition, fought for legislation that allows immigrant New Yorkers to vacate old marijuana convictions to clear the path to become green card holders or citizens, instead of facing deportation. However, the federal Controlled Substances Act and harsh immigration laws continue to put immigrants at risk, regardless of state and local policies to decriminalize and legalize cannabis. Even employment in the legal market may lead to consequences such as denial of citizenship or a green card.

The MORE Act builds on the progress made in many states and ends immigration consequences due to marijuana use. It also would give immigrants more equal access to the jobs and opportunities in a multi-billion dollar legal cannabis industry, which currently still carries risks for noncitizens.

Members of New York's Congressional delegation have been leaders in passage of the MORE Act, including bill leaders Jerry Nadler and Nydia Velazquez and original co-sponsor Hakeem



Jeffries. Other co-sponsors from New York include: Jamaal Bowman, Adriano Espaillat, Mondaire Jones, Carolyn Maloney, Gregory Meeks, Grace Meng, Joseph Morelle, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Paul Tonko and Ritchie Torres.

IDP is a member of the [Marijuana Justice Coalition](#), convened by the Drug Policy Alliance, which has worked tirelessly to end the federal prohibition of marijuana at the federal level.

To learn more about IDP's long fight for marijuana justice to repair the harms done to immigrant communities, see www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/marijuana/.

Read stories from those impacted by marijuana criminalization:

<https://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/3d-flip-book/the-tip-of-the-iceberg-immigration-consequences-of-a-marijuana-offense/>

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The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is a New York-based nonprofit that works to secure fairness and justice for immigrants in the racially-biased U.S. criminal and immigration systems.

IDP fights to end the current era of unprecedented mass criminalization, detention and deportation through a multi-pronged strategy including advocacy, litigation, legal support, community partnerships, and strategic communications. Visit www.immigrantdefenseproject.org and follow [@ImmDefense](#).