



U. S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Eastern District of
Washington

PRESS RELEASE

<p>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p> <p>Thursday, August 29, 2013</p>	<p>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</p> <p>Joseph Harrington, First Assistant U.S. Attorney (509) 353-2767</p>
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"STATEMENT OF U.S. ATTORNEY MICHAEL C. ORMSBY ON FEDERAL MARIJUANA ENFORCEMENT POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT"

Spokane - Today, the United States Department of Justice announced an update to its federal marijuana enforcement policy in light of recent state ballot initiatives that legalize, under state law, the possession of small amounts of marijuana by adults and provide for the state regulation of marijuana production, processing and sale. The Department also issued a memorandum to all United States Attorneys that makes clear that the Department will continue to enforce the Controlled Substances Act and details the federal interests that guide federal enforcement relating to marijuana. Based on assurances that Washington and Colorado will impose an appropriately strict regulatory system, the Department has informed the governors of both states that it is deferring its right to challenge their legalization laws at this time.

The following is a statement from Michael C. Ormsby, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington:

Here in the Eastern District of Washington, the United States Attorney's Office has and will continue to enforce the Controlled Substances Act. My office will continue an aggressive focus on the promotion and sale of drugs to minors, violence and the use of firearms, and the trafficking of marijuana across state or international lines. We will continue our work against organized criminal organizations and their underground economy, and against those who would use

drug proceeds to fund other criminal activity.

We have and will continue to focus our prosecution efforts on federal enforcement priorities in Eastern Washington and to work with our state, local, and tribal partners to ensure the safety of our communities. This will not change.

It is important to underscore that the Department guidance is premised on the expectation that the state will implement strong and effective regulatory and enforcement systems. This is what Washington voters expect and were promised. I look forward to meeting with state leaders to hear how the promises of enhanced public safety will be met.

The continued operation and proliferation of unregulated, for-profit entities outside of the state's regulatory and licensing scheme is not tenable and violates both state and federal law. While federal prosecution resources are limited, my office will continue to enforce federal law in this arena by focusing on the critical public and federal interests outlined in the Department memo today.

This is an important moment for Washington, and I remain committed to working with law enforcement partners to focus on our priorities and address threats to public safety.

The Department's announcement and a link to the guidance memorandum can be found here: <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2013/August/13-opa-974.html>.

Members of the public are also advised that it remains against federal law to bring any amount of marijuana onto federal property, including all federal buildings, federal lands including national parks and forests, military installations, and courthouses. Individuals that do so will be subject to federal penalties.