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BERNARD C. PARKS
Councilmember, Eighth District

May 30, 2014

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Oppose Pending Marijuana Legislation

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am writing to urge you to not bring to the floor for a vote four currently pending bills (listed below) which, if enacted, would decriminalize marijuana and greatly enhance its proliferation to the detriment and safety of our communities. These bills are as follows:

H.R. 689 (Blumenauer) the States' Medical Marijuana Patient Protection Act which would provide for the rescheduling of marijuana, and for the medical use of marijuana, in accordance with the law of various states.

H.R. 710 (Farr) the Truth in Trials Act which would amend Title 18 of the United States Code, to provide an affirmative defense for the medical use of marijuana in accordance with the laws of various states, and for other purposes.

H.R. 499 (Polis) the Ending Federal Marijuana Prohibition Act of 2013, which would decriminalize marijuana at the Federal level and leave to the States a power to regulate marijuana that is similar to the power they have to regulate alcohol.

H.R. 784 (Lee) the States' Medical Marijuana Property Rights Protection Act which would amend the controlled substances act so as to provide a blanket exemption to real property from civil forfeiture due to medical-marijuana related conduct that is authorized by state law.

As a police officer for over 38 years and a retired Chief of Police of Los Angeles, I have first hand knowledge of the negative impacts these bills would have. Allowing states to have oversight over marijuana would give them greater powers than they currently have over the regulation of any other drugs, which is exclusively a federal responsibility. Allowing for an affirmative defense against federal drug charges for the medical use of marijuana would be inconsistent with current Department of Justice guidelines and would ignore current FDA and DEA powers and responsibilities. Providing a blanket exemption to real property from civil forfeiture due to medical marijuana related conduct runs counter to the fact that forfeiture is an invaluable tool in the prosecution of drug charges.

In short, these bills are ill-conceived and detrimental to law enforcement efforts against illegal drug use in our communities. I urge you to oppose these measures and to prevent them from being brought before the full House for a vote.

Sincerely,

BERNARD C. PARKS
Councilmember, 8th District
City of Los Angeles

