



## **Vote Hemp Petition Gains More than 100,000 Signatures, Office of the White House to Issue Formal Response Within 60 Days**

### **Petition Seeks Support For Bipartisan Hemp Farming Legislation to Boost Rural Economy**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Vote Hemp, the nation's leading grassroots hemp advocacy organization working to change state and federal laws to allow commercial hemp farming, has garnered more than 100,000 signatures on its White House petition, "Let American Farmers Grow Hemp Once Again to Create Jobs and Rebuild the Rural Economy." This We the People petition was submitted directly to the White House via the office's website on Inauguration Day, 2017, and requests the President's support in the effort and work with Congress to lift federal prohibition on industrial hemp farming, so that rural economies can take advantage of hemp farming, processing and manufacturing opportunities. According to the White House website, President Trump will issue a formal response to the petition within 60 days of February 19, 2017—the date by which the petition surpassed 100,000 signatures. To view the petition, please visit:

- <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/let-american-farmers-grow-hemp-once-again-create-jobs-and-rebuild-rural-economy>

For nearly two decades, Vote Hemp has been dedicated to passing legislation to allow for hemp cultivation, and create a free market for industrial hemp in the United States. This latest advocacy project garnered attention from people across the country, with over 102,000 signatures collected in less than 30 days—demonstrating the support Americans have for legalizing industrial hemp farming, its ability to create jobs and stimulate economies throughout rural America.

"The growing momentum to bring back hemp farming is astounding. This petition gained signatures quickly from people in every state in the nation," said Eric Steenstra, President of Vote Hemp. "Celebrities such as Ziggy Marley endorsed the effort, as well as top manufacturers of hemp products in the U.S. like Dr. Bronner's, Nutiva and Nature's Path. The success of this petition demonstrates Americans' eagerness to see hemp brought back to our rural agricultural communities. We hope President Trump joins us in working toward achieving this goal."

The petition's success comes at a propitious time, as over 100 hemp advocates from around the country will attend the Vote Hemp National Lobby Day in Washington, DC, on March 1, 2017. Business owners, farmers, entrepreneurs, sustainability and technology advocates, and consumers alike will meet with their legislative representatives to discuss the importance of passing the Industrial Hemp Farming Act in Congress. For more information about the Vote Hemp National Lobby Day, please visit:

- <http://votehemp.com/PR/2017-1-30-VoteHemp-HempLobbyDay-WashingtonDC-March1.html>

Currently, the market for hemp products in the United States exceeds \$600 million annually. Americans constitute the largest consumer market for hemp products in the world, with strong demand for hemp clothing and textiles, healthful foods, dietary supplements, construction materials and automotive parts. However, due to outdated federal drug laws, the United States remains the only G7 country that does not allow industrial hemp cultivation nationwide. As a result, nearly all of that \$600 million funds hemp suppliers and manufacturers in China, Canada and Europe which only increases our trade deficit.

To date, thirty-one states have defined industrial hemp as distinct and removed barriers to its production. These states are able to take immediate advantage of the industrial hemp research and pilot program provision, Section 7606 of the Farm Bill: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia.

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*Vote Hemp is a national, single-issue, non-profit organization dedicated to the acceptance of and a free market for low-THC industrial hemp and to changes in current law to allow U.S. farmers to once again grow the agricultural crop. More information about hemp legislation and the crop's many uses may be found at [www.VoteHemp.com](http://www.VoteHemp.com).*