

The Vote Hemp Report

Publisher:

Eric Steenstra, Vote Hemp, Inc.

Managing Editor:

Arthur Hanks

Production Editor:

Eric Lineback

Copy Editor:

David Bronner

Advertising Sales:

Jason Freeman

Creative Director:

Michael Aubert

Editorial Board:

David Bronner

Gero Leson

Eric Lineback

Eric Steenstra

Contributors:

David Bronner, Tim Castleman, Peter Dragla, David Frankel, Mari Kane, Michael Karus, Gero Leson, Gretchen Monette, Peter A. Nelson, Bob Newland, Erik Rothenberg, MA Smith

Vote Hemp Board:

Eric Steenstra, President

David Bronner

Eric Lineback, Treasurer

David Frankel

Candi Penn, Secretary

Erik Rothenberg

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Vote Hemp
PO Box 2279
Merrifield, VA 22116

voice/fax:

866-VOTE-HEMP (868-3436)

outside US: 202-318-8999

report@votehemp.com

www.votehemp.com



Cynthia Thielen
Hawaii State Representative

We in Hawaii are fortunate to be home to the first industrial hemp crop to be cultivated in American soil since the federal government's erroneous policy reversal caused the death of the agricultural hemp industry shortly after WWII. Through state legislation passed in 1999, the Hawaii Industrial

Hemp Research Project (HIHRP) has progressed successfully over the last three years in defining the strain of hemp best suited to Hawaii's climate. The vital research continuing in this project is the first step towards establishing an industry that will bolster the health of Hawaii's economy and environment.

Industrial hemp is an ideal crop for Hawaii. Because of our climate and hemp's growth cycle, we have the advantage of being able to produce at least three crops per year. Although industrial hemp has myriad uses and products, I see Hawaii focusing on seed production, building materials and bioremediation.

Why is hemp important for my state? For decades Hawaii has remained dependent on tourism, the military and agriculture for its revenue base, all of which have seen a downturn in recent years. We are currently struggling in the wake of our failing pineapple and sugar industries, decreased tourism and military cutbacks. Hawaii is at a crucial turning point. We have an opportunity to shift from dependence on foreign and federally influenced markets to locally-based industry. I see industrial hemp as a key to providing Hawaii with much needed economic independence and diversity.

Industrial hemp can provide business and employment opportunities across the U.S. It's time to get past the "giggle factor" and look at how corporations already are taking advantage of this versatile crop: tree-free hemp

paper is now available in Staples stores nationally; The Body Shop carries a line of hemp lotions, soaps and lip conditioners; hemp foods are available at natural food stores everywhere; and Ford and DaimlerChrysler, among others, are using hemp composite automobile parts.

Why is there domestic opposition to industrial hemp when over thirty industrialized nations (including Canada, England, France and Germany) permit it to be grown? Why is there opposition when hemp was an important crop from the founding of our nation (when it was once even accepted as payment of taxes) up through WWII? We all know about government regulations and what they can do to hurt businesses.

On a personal note, I have benefited greatly from the use of hemp oil as a treatment for sun-damaged skin. After having a cancerous basal cell removed, I started ingesting one tablespoon of hemp oil daily. My dermatologist credits the hemp oil for the rapid and cosmetically successful healing of my incision. *(Editor's note: this is most likely specifically due to hemp oil's exceptional GLA and SDA content; see Gero Leson's "Nutritional Profile and Benefits of Hemp Seed, Nut and Oil" on page 12).*

Industrial hemp's versatility makes it an incredible agricultural crop and economic booster. I am proud that Hawaii has recognized the value and potential of this crop and will continue to support its establishment on the local and national level.

Aloha,

Cynthia Thielen
Assistant Minority (Republican) Floor Leader
Hawaii House of Representatives



Louie B. Nunn
Former Governor of Kentucky

Editor's note: Louie B. Nunn was the Governor of Kentucky from 1967 to 1971. He was the last Republican to be elected Governor of the state.

It is time to separate reality from rhetoric. When I was Governor, I listened to all sides of the issues, carefully considered all opinions before me and tried to be fair in my responses. Being actively involved in public service, I am often asked for my opinion on various matters affecting our state. One of the most recent, the industrial hemp issue, has also proven to be one of the most important.

Although Kentucky has long been known for its historical hemp industry, it wasn't until recently that I became educated about industrial hemp. Frankly, I was opposed to the legalization of hemp for years because I had been of the opinion that hemp was marijuana. I was shortsighted in my thinking, and I was wrong.

As Kentucky farmers struggled with the loss of 65% of their tobacco income, I was asked to examine information on hemp. What I learned was that hemp is not a drug and never was. After studying the facts, I believe hemp cultivation has the potential to make a positive impact on our faltering agricultural economy and to create economic opportunities for our farmers and local industries.

I am concerned with all the misleading and intimidating rhetoric being offered to politicians as facts. We Kentuckians have been so mired in misinformation about industrial hemp that it has become difficult to distinguish reality from rhetoric.

They say politics makes strange bedfellows, but none stranger than marijuana growers and law enforcement. Like bootleggers and preachers, they oppose

legislation for different self-serving reasons.

Law enforcement opposes legalizing hemp production because officers get paid to destroy it, while marijuana growers oppose legalization because hemp cross-pollinates and destroys marijuana's potency. And neither side talks about Orincon, a company with remote sensing technology able to differentiate marijuana and hemp from up to 5,000 feet in the air, or other simple in-field tests that accomplish the same results.

But despite these diametrically opposed sides, there is a middle ground where common sense and rational people exist together. Today, with the support of farmers and businessmen, legislators in fourteen states including Kentucky have already passed legislation encouraging or allowing the growth of industrial hemp. Is it rational to say all of these folks are involved with the efforts to legalize marijuana? Should we listen when Canada's Royal Mounted Police report no problems regulating hemp, or are they also working to legalize marijuana? I know Kentucky State Police are as well educated as their Canadian counterparts and could as easily understand and incorporate industrial hemp regulations.

As difficult issues are analyzed with just, unbiased and sensible minds, solutions reached are usually fair and beneficial to all. Why should the industrial hemp issue be treated any differently? We should be looking forward to the time when intelligence and truth overshadow rhetoric and ignorance.

Remember, we can't distinguish between Kentucky white moonshine and spring water just by looking, but we haven't seen fit to outlaw spring water.

Regards,

Louie B. Nunn
Former Governor of Kentucky