

NEWS ADVISORY

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U.S. Farmers Suing DEA to Grow Hemp in Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals on November 12

Oral Arguments Open to Public; Media Availability after Proceedings

ST. PAUL, MN – Two North Dakota farmers, who filed a lawsuit in June of 2007 to end the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) ban on commercial hemp farming in the U.S., will be back in court on Wednesday, November 12, 2008 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Oral arguments before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit begin at 9:00 am CST in the Warren E. Burger Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse at 316 North Robert Street in St. Paul and will immediately be followed by a press conference on the courthouse steps.

The farmers, North Dakota State Rep. David Monson and Wayne Hauge, are appealing a decision by the U.S. District Court, District of North Dakota on a number of grounds; in particular, the District Court ruled that hemp and marijuana are the same, as the DEA has wrongly contended. In fact, scientific evidence clearly shows that not only is industrial hemp genetically distinct from drug varieties of *Cannabis*, but there are also absolutely no psychoactive effects gained from ingesting it. All court documents related to the case can be found online (http://www.VoteHemp.com/legal_cases_ND.html).

Representative Monson will appear in court to observe oral arguments made on his behalf by attorneys Joe Sandler and Tim Purdon. If successful, the landmark lawsuit will lead to the first state-regulated commercial cultivation of industrial hemp in over fifty years.

WHO: Rep. David Monson, North Dakota House Assistant Majority Leader, licensed hemp farmer
Tim Purdon, attorney with Vogel Law Firm of Bismarck, ND and co-counsel for the plaintiffs
Joe Sandler, co-counsel for the plaintiffs and legal counsel for Vote Hemp, Inc.
Eric Steenstra, President, Vote Hemp, Inc.
Lynn Gordon, Owner, French Meadow Café of Minneapolis, MN

WHAT: Oral arguments and media availability

WHERE: Warren E. Burger Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse, 316 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN

WHEN: Wednesday, November 12, 9:00 am CST for oral arguments (media availability afterwards)

Background

In 2007 the North Dakota Legislature removed the requirement that state-licensed industrial hemp farmers first obtain DEA permits before growing hemp. The question before the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals will be whether or not federal authorities can prosecute state-licensed farmers who grow non-drug oilseed and fiber hemp pursuant to North Dakota state law. Vote Hemp, the nation's leading industrial hemp advocacy group, and its supporters are providing financial support for the lawsuit. If it is successful, states across the nation will be free to implement their own hemp farming laws without fear of federal interference. Learn more about hemp farming and the wide variety of non-drug industrial hemp products manufactured in the U.S. at www.VoteHemp.com and www.TheHIA.org.

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