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## **Farm Bill With Amendment to Allow Industrial Hemp Research Passes House in 216 to 208 Floor Vote**

### ***Amendment Marks First Hemp Legislation to Pass in Congress in Over Fifty Years***

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Vote Hemp, the nation's leading hemp grassroots advocacy organization, working to revitalize industrial hemp production in the U.S., is excited to report that an amendment to legalize hemp production for research purposes was included in H.R. 2642, better known as the Farm Bill, passed the House by a vote of 216 to 208 yesterday afternoon. Introduced by Representatives Jared Polis (D-CO), Thomas Massie (R-KY) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and passed by a vote of 225 to 200 on a previous unsuccessful version of the Farm Bill, the hemp amendment survived and is part of the House version this time around. The amendment allows colleges and universities to grow hemp for academic and agricultural research purposes, but applies only to states where industrial hemp farming is already legal under state law. The full text of the bill may be found at <http://VoteHemp.com/legislation>.

"Although I strongly opposed the Republican Farm Bill, I was pleased to see that the bipartisan amendment that I offered with Representatives Blumenauer and Massie was included in the final bill that passed the House of Representatives today," said Rep. Polis. "This commonsense amendment will allow colleges and universities to grow and cultivate industrial hemp for academic and agricultural research purposes in states where industrial hemp cultivation is already legal. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to ensure that this language becomes law."

"This amendment is a small but fundamental change in the laws that hopefully will one day allow Kentucky farmers to grow industrial hemp again," said Rep. Massie. "It's our goal that the research this amendment enables would further broadcast the economic benefits of the sustainable and job-creating crop. I look forward to working with Rep. Polis and Rep. Blumenauer on this issue."

So far in the 2013 legislative season, industrial hemp legislation has been introduced in twenty states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia. The full text of these states' hemp bills may also be found at <http://VoteHemp.com/legislation>.

“With the U.S. hemp industry estimated at over \$500 million in annual retail sales and growing, a change in federal law to allow for colleges and universities to grow hemp for research would mean that we will finally begin to regain the knowledge that unfortunately has been lost over the past fifty years,” says Vote Hemp President, Eric Steenstra.

In addition to the Farm Bill amendment, two standalone industrial hemp bills have been introduced in the 113th Congress so far. H.R. 525, the "Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2013," was introduced in the U.S. House on February 6, 2013. The companion bill, S. 359, was introduced in the U.S. Senate soon thereafter on February 14, 2013. The bills define industrial hemp, exclude it from the definition of "marihuana" in the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), and give states the exclusive authority to regulate the growing and processing of the crop under state law. If passed, the bills would remove federal restrictions on the domestic cultivation of industrial hemp, defined as the non-drug oilseed and fiber varieties of *Cannabis*. The full text of the bills, as well as their status and co-sponsors, can also be found at <http://VoteHemp.com/legislation>.

To date, thirty-one states have introduced pro-hemp legislation and nineteen have passed pro-hemp legislation. Nine states (Colorado, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia) have defined industrial hemp as distinct and removed barriers to its production. Three states (Hawaii, Kentucky and Maryland) have passed bills creating commissions or authorizing research. Nine states (California, Colorado, Illinois, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Vermont and Virginia) have passed resolutions. And eight states (Arkansas, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota and Vermont) have passed study bills. However, despite state authorization to grow hemp, farmers in those states still risk raids by federal agents, prison time, and property and civil asset forfeiture if they plant the crop, due to the failure of federal policy to distinguish non-drug oilseed and fiber varieties of *Cannabis* (i.e., industrial hemp) from psychoactive drug varieties (i.e., "marihuana").

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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) or [www.TheHIA.org](http://www.TheHIA.org). Video footage of hemp farming in other countries is available upon request by contacting Ryan Fletcher at 202-641-0277 or [ryan@votehemp.com](mailto:ryan@votehemp.com).*