

VH

Vote Hemp™

2015

Annual Report







A Historic Hemp Year

As 2015 comes to a close, we look back on what was a breakthrough year for the hemp industry in the US. Legal hemp pilot programs were planted on thousands of acres in 7 states and more states are planning programs for 2016. **The roots of a domestic industry have begun to take hold. It was a very productive year thanks to your support and advocacy!** Here are some of the highlights of our progress this year.

- Introduced bi-partisan federal hemp legislation in the Senate and House
- Grew our support to 65 bipartisan House cosponsors (a 30% increase from the 113th Congress) and 10 bipartisan Senate cosponsors (a 100% increase)
- Passed federal budget amendment to protect transportation, sale, and processing of hemp produced in Farm Bill compliant pilot programs
- Achieved the largest winning vote margin in Congress yet – 289 to 132 (Massie CJS amendment)
- Hosted Senate and House briefings to update members and staff
- Coordinated hundreds of meetings with elected officials
- Worked with legislators and hemp activists in 27 states and testified in support of pro-hemp bills
- Met with officials at USDA to advocate for their support of the nascent hemp industry
- Coordinated a [letter from members of Congress](#) to USDA urging that they clarify their position on supporting hemp research and reminding them that the Farm Bill supports hemp research and pilot programs
- Requested [Sen. Wyden speak](#) from the Senate chamber on behalf of Hemp History Week
- Generated thousands of emails, calls and petition signatures to Congress
- Supported the legal efforts to remove the injunction against Alex White Plume and his tiospaye (family)
- Provided up-to date information on industrial hemp bills and pilot programs via email and our web site
- Promoted the benefits of industrial hemp in the media and at conferences worldwide

We are making such important progress but the hemp industry is still facing challenges sourcing seed, learning best practices and establishing processors. **We must legalize hemp farming in all 50 states and pass federal legislation that allows states to regulate commercial hemp farming without DEA permits.**

We need your help to make this a reality. Please review our annual report and consider making a donation to support our work to bring hemp back to US agriculture.

Vote Hemp President,
Eric Steenstra



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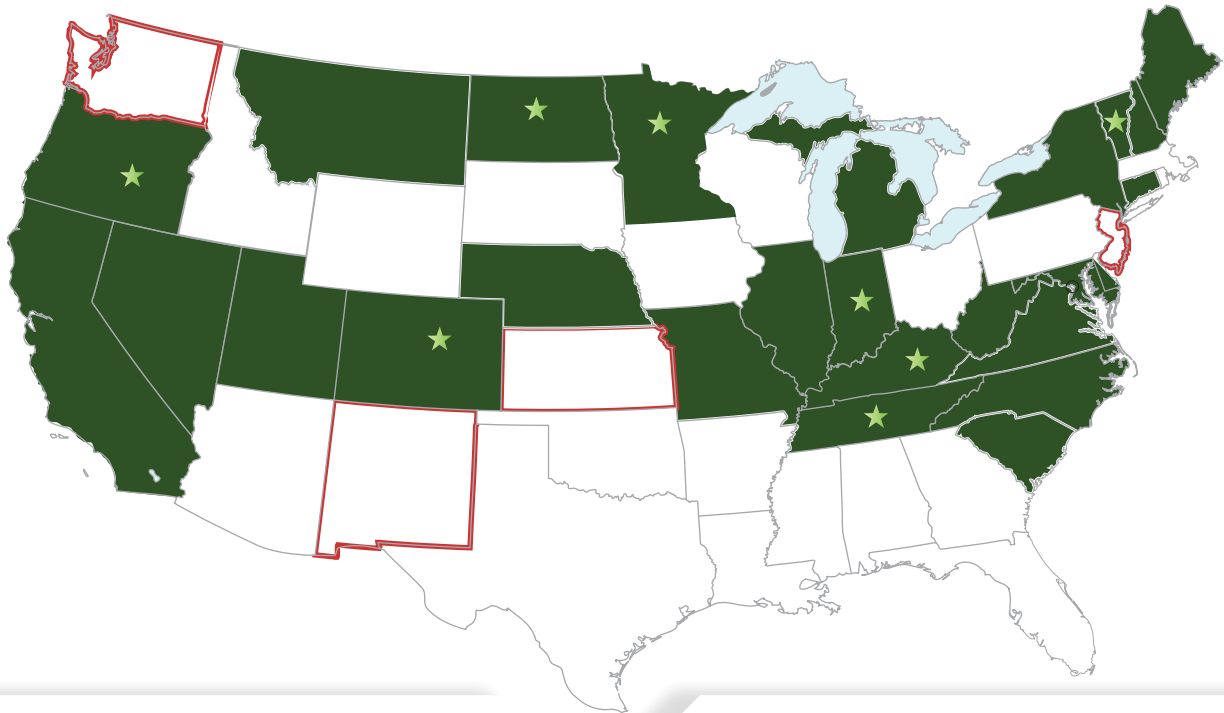
[clickable links](#)

Vote Hemp is a national, single-issue, non-profit advocacy group founded in 2000 by members of the hemp industry to remove barriers to industrial hemp farming in the U.S. through education, legislation and advocacy. We work to build grass-roots support for hemp through voter education, registration and mobilization, as well as defend against any new laws, regulations or policies that would prohibit or restrict hemp trade.

Vote Hemp © 2015
www.votehemp.com

Report by Colleen (Sauvé) Keahey
Executive Editor, Eric Steenstra

2015 National Hemp Update

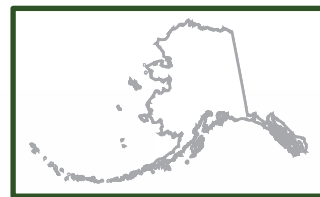


Increased Support in Congress for Industrial Hemp

The 2014 Farm Bill included Sec. 7606, *The Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research*, defining industrial hemp and allowing for licensed pilot programs; now underway in nine (9) states. Since then, Congress has doubled-down with strong bipartisan support for industrial hemp farming in the U.S., passing FY 16 CJS appropriations amendments 289-132 and 282-146 in the House and by a voice vote in the Senate Appropriations Committee to stop the DEA and Dept. of Justice from using funds in the contravention of Sec. 7606 hemp programs. Sen. McConnell (R-KY) announced additional language to FY 16 Omnibus Appropriations bill which expands protection for transportation, processing, sale and use of hemp produced in legal hemp states in accordance with Sec. 7606. McConnell's language was included in the FY16 Omnibus Appropriations bill, which passed on 12/22/15 and prohibits the use of funds by any agency including the DEA in contravention of Sec. 7606.

States Rights Around the Country

Since the passage of *The Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research* in the Farm Bill, many new states have passed hemp legislation. But because of current federal laws, these states must operate in a legal grey area of uncertainty, where importing viable hemp seed still carries risk of interference from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) & U.S. Customs. In June 2014, the DEA seized over 280 pounds of hemp seed purchased by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Further federal action, such as the passage of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act (H.R. 525 & S. 134), is still needed to provide certainty to American farmers and businesses, and for investment in this re-emerging industry. **As of December 2015, twenty-seven (27) states have defined industrial hemp as a distinct agriculture crop, and removed barriers to production.**



- ★ States that grew hemp in 2015
- States enacted hemp legislation in accordance with Sec. 7606
- States expected to introduce hemp legislation in 2016

May grow in accordance with Sec. 7606: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia.

Nine (9) states grew hemp in 2015. They are: Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee and Vermont

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State Hemp Legislation, Status & 2016 Legislative Sessions

ALABAMA

2016 Session: 2/2/16 - 5/16/16 (est.)

ALASKA -

SB 8
 Introduced: 1/21/15 by Sen. Ellis
 Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
 Status: Judiciary Committee - No Action
 2016 Session: 1/19/16 - 4/17/16 (est.)

ARIZONA -

SB 1225
 Introduced: 1/27/15 by Sen. Pancrazi
 Summary: Creates study committee
 Status: Passed Senate 3/5/15,
 Stuck in House
 2016 Session: 1/11/16 - 4/21/16 (est.)

ARKANSAS

2016 Session: 4/13/16 - 5/12/16 (est.)

CALIFORNIA

2016 Session: 1/4/16 - 11/30/16 (est.)

COLORADO

2016 Session: 1/13/16 - 05/4/16 (est.)



*Colorado State University
 Photo courtesy Agriculture
 Experiment Station*

GEORGIA -

HB704
 Introduced: 4/2/15 by Rep. Pezold
 Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
 Status: No Action
 2016 Session: 1/11/16 - 3/17/16 (est.)

HAWAII -

HB 508 SD2
 Introduced: 1/26/15 by Rep. Onishi
 Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
 Status: No Action
 2016 Session: 1/20/16 - 5/1/16 (est.)



*University of Hawaii
 60 day old hemp crop - July 2015*

ILLINOIS

2016 Session: 1/13/16 - 1/11/17

INDIANA -

HB 1181
 Introduced: 1/12/15 by Rep. Lehe
 Summary: Refines policies & creates study
 committee for hemp extract.
 Status: **Governor signed 5/4/15**
 2016 Session: 1/5/16 - 3/10/16 (est.)

CONNECTICUT - HR 5780

Introduced: 1/12/15 by Rep. Ziobron & Rep. Carter
 Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
 Status: **Governor signed 7/2/15**
 2016 Session: 2/3/16 - 5/4/16

DELAWARE

2016 Session: 1/12/16 - 6/30/16

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2016 Session: 1/5/16 - 12/31/16

FLORDIA -

HB 363
 Introduced: 1/20/15 by Sen. Vasilinda
 Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
 Status: No Action
 2016 Session: 1/12/16 - 3/17/16 (est.)



*Purdue University - hemp field day
 Photo by Maureen Hayden*

IOWA - SSB 1260
Introduced: 3/4/15 by Sen. Seng
Summary: Study legislation
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 1/11/16 - 4/19/16 (est.)

HF 470
Introduced: 3/4/15 by Rep. Forbes
Summary: Hemp production
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 1/11/16 - 4/19/16 (est.)

KANSAS
2016 Session: 1/11/16 - 5/30/16 (est.)
Note: Rep. Dove expected to introduce bill

KENTUCKY
2016 Session: 1/5/16 - 4/15/16



University of Kentucky - hemp field day

LOUISIANA
2016 Session: 3/14/16 - 6/2/16 (est.)

MAINE - LD 4
Introduced: 1/7/15 by Rep. Sanderson
Summary: Amends MRSA §2231 to promote industrial hemp
Senate blocks Governor's veto 6/16/15.
Status:
2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 5/1/16 (est.)

MARYLAND - HB 803
Introduced: 2/13/15
Summary: Hemp production
Status: **Governor signed 5/12/15**
2016 Session: 1/13/16 - 4/4/16 (est.)

MASSACHUSETTS - H 773
Introduced: 1/20/15 by Rep. Walsh
Summary: Cultivation regulations
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 1/4/17

H 721
Introduced: 1/20/15 by Rep. Mark
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 1/4/17

MICHIGAN
2016 Session: 1/13/16 - 12/31/16

MINNESOTA - Omnibus Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources Appropriations Bill
Introduced: 6/12/15 by Sen. Tomassoni; Representatives McNamara, Hamilton and Davids
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: **Governor signed 6/13/15**
2016 Session: 3/8/16 - 5/8/16 (est.)

SF 618
Introduced: 2/9/15 by Senator's Eken; Petersen, B; Koenen; Weber; and Sparks
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 3/8/16 - 5/8/16 (est.)

HF 683
Introduced: 2/9/15 by Representative's Franson; Kahn; Persell; Hamilton; Yarusso; Clark; Metsa; Hansen; Applebaum; Lillie; Bly; Johnson, C.; Torkelson
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: No Action
2016 Session: 3/8/16 - 5/8/16 (est.)

HF 14
Introduced: 6/12/15 by Rep. Hamilton
Summary: Amends for policy & changes
Status: Introduced for 2016
2016 Session: 3/8/16 - 5/8/16 (est.)



*University of Minnesota
Photo courtesy Channel 5 ABC*

MISSISSIPPI
2016 Session: 1/5/16 - 4/2/16 (est.)

MISSOURI - SB 255
Introduced: 1/15/15 by Sen. Scaaf & Sen. Holsman
Summary: Definition & 3 yr. licensing program
Status: Passed Senate 4/1/15, Placed on informal calendar - No Action
2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 5/30/16 (est.)

HB 830
Introduced: 1/28/15 by Rep. Hinson *continued...*

Summary: Definition & 3 yr. licensing program
Status: Passed House 4/23/15,
Placed on informal calendar - No Action
2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 5/30/16 (est.)

MONTANA

2016 Session: No Session

NEBRASKA

2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 4/20/16 (est.)

NEVADA -

SB 305
Introduced: 3/16/15 by Segerblom
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: **Governor signed 6/4/15**
2016 Session: No Session

NEW HAMPSHIRE

2016 Session: 1/6/16 - 6/30/16 (est.)

NEW JERSEY

2016 Session: 1/12/16 - 1/10/17
Note: Assemblyman Gusciora expected to introduce hemp bill.

NEW MEXICO - SB 94

Introduced: 1/22/15 by Sen. McSorley
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: **Governor vetoed 4/10/15**
2016 Session: 1/19/16 - 2/18/16
Note: Sen. McSorley expected to refile.

NEW YORK

2016 Session: 1/19/16 - 1/4/17

NORTH CAROLINA - SB 313

Introduced: 3/17/15 by Senator's Bingham;
Hise & Waddell
Summary: Creates Hemp Commission to establish & oversee a growers licensing program, which must be funded & also decriminalizes the production and use of industrial hemp upon the completion of rulemaking by the Board of Ag.
Status: **Became law without signature 10/31/15**
2016 Session: 4/25/16 - 7/1/16 (est.)

NORTH DAKOTA - SB 2145

Introduced: 1/8/15 by Senator's Davison; Luick;
Oban & Poolman
Summary: Background check for licensing
Status: **Governor signed 4/1/15**
2016 Sessions: No Session *continued...*



North Dakota State University

OHIO

2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 12/31/16 (est.)

OKLAHOMA

2016 Sessions: 2/1/16 - 5/25/16 (est.)

OREGON

2016 Sessions: 2/1/16 - 3/4/16 (est.)

PENNSYLVANIA - SB 50

Introduced: 2/12/15 by Sen. Schwank & Sen. Folmer
Summary: Est. a board to act in accordance with SEC 7606
Status: Referred to Appropriations, No Action
2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 11/30/16

HB 967
Introduced: 3/15/15 by Rep. Diamond
Summary: Industrial hemp research exclusive to academic institutions & the Dept. of Ag.
Status: No Action
2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 11/30/16

PUERTO RICO

2016 Sessions: 1/14/13 - 12/31/16 (est.)

RHODE ISLAND - HB 6241

Introduced: 5/25/15 by Rep. Newberry & Rep. Price
Summary: Excludes hemp from the state's Uniform Controlled Substances Act
Status: No Action
2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 6/30/16 (est.)

HB 6177 | SB 990
Introduced: 5/7/15 by Rep. Keable & Sosnowski
Summary: Provides a definition for "CBD-Rich Hemp Oil" to legalize cannabidiol and industrial hemp *continued...*

Status: Passed House 6/18/15
2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 6/30/16 (est.)

SOUTH CAROLINA - H 4340

Introduced: 6/4/15 by Rep. Home & Rep. King
Summary: Amends Chp. 55, Title 46
Status: Referred to Medical, Military, Public & Municipal Affairs committee
2016 Sessions: 1/12/16 - 3/28/16 (est.)

SOUTH DAKOTA

2016 Session: 1/12/16 - 3/28/16 (est.)

TENNESSEE

2016 Session: 1/12/16 - 4/16/16 (est.)
Note: Rep. Faison expected to file bill to expand program



*Middle Tennessee State University
hemp field day*

TEXAS - HB 1322
Introduced: 2/11/15 by Rep. Farias
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: No Action - Left Pending in Ag Committee
2016 Sessions: No Session

Introduced: HB 557
12/19/14 by Rep. Farias
Summary: Allows academic institutions to participate in accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: Place on General Calendar - No Action
2016 Sessions: No Session

UTAH

2016 Sessions: 1/25/16 - 3/11/16 (est.)

VERMONT

2016 Sessions: 1/5/16 - 5/10/16 (est.)

VIRGINIA - HB 1277

Introduced: 7/21/14 by Del. Yost
Summary: Academic pilot program
Status: **Governor signed 3/17/15**
2016 Sessions: 1/13/16 - 3/5/16 (est.)

WASHINGTON - SB 5012

Introduced: 12/15/14 by Sen. Hatfield & Sen. Honeyfield
Summary: Authorizes the growing of industrial hemp in the state by adding to Title 15 RCW 69.50.204
Status: By resolution, reintroduced & retained in present status, 6/28/15
2016 Sessions: 1/11/16 - 3/10/16 (est.)

Introduced: HB 1552
1/22/15 by Representatives Shea; Taylor; Condotta; Pike; Goodman, G. Hunt; Scott; Buys Holy; Griffey; Blake; Fitzgibbon, Hurst, Ormsby, Young & Magendanz
Summary: Authorizes the Dept. of Ag to est. licensing for hemp growers adding to Title 15 RCW 69.50.204
Status: By resolution, reintroduced & retained in present status, 6/28/15
2016 Sessions: 1/11/16 - 3/10/16 (est.)

WEST VIRGINIA - SB 221

Introduced: 1/14/15 by Sen. Snyder
Summary: Authorizes Ag Commissioner to promulgate rules for industrial hemp
Status: Reported to Judiciary Sub. Committee - No Action
2016 Sessions: 1/13/16 - 3/5/16 (est.)

WISCONSIN - AB 215

Introduced: 5/14/15 by Rep. Cosdine
Summary: In accordance with Sec. 7606
Status: Referred to State Affairs & Government Operations Committee - No Action
2016 Sessions: 1/12/16 - 1/2/17

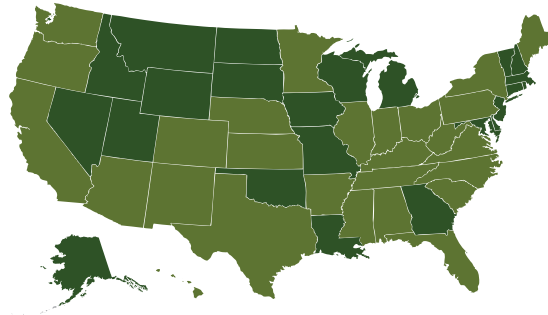
WYOMING

2016 Session: 2/8/16 - 3/3/16

5 ADVOCACY TIPS TO #TAKEACTION IN 2016

1. Review & share the Advocacy Toolkit , pages 11 - 13. *Print or export pages to share with others.*
2. Each month, mark your calendars with reminders to send letters to Congress. Visit <http://votehemp.com/takeaction>
3. Subscribe to [Vote Hemp's newsletter](#) to learn about latest action alerts & developments.
4. Follow Vote Hemp on social media for breaking news & #TakeAction announcements.
5. Contact Vote Hemp's National Outreach Coordinator for support. *See contact info, next page.*

National Outreach



● states that were provided materials, resources, action alerts or held an event where VH presented



10k

constituent messages sent to Congress

Industrial Hemp Farming Act

S. 134 - 6330 messages
H.R. 525 - 1672 messages

Therapeutic Hemp Medical Access Act

S. 1333 - 1806 messages

Hemp Amendments to FY16 legislation

200 messages



4.8k

advocates took action

Top 5 States with the Most Active Advocates

1. **California**
1641 messages
2. **Texas**
804 messages
3. **Virginia**
720 messages
4. **Oregon**
717 messages
5. **Washington**
638 messages



283k

social media followers

Facebook

255k followers
100% increase since 2014

Twitter

27.6 followers |
180% increase since 2014



27

states supported

Twenty-seven (27) states were given

education & legislation support: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, West Virginia and Virginia



National Outreach Coordinator Colleen Keahey

Colleen joined Vote Hemp in June of 2014 after successfully supporting the passage of the industrial hemp law in her home state of Tennessee. Colleen facilitates grassroots support to further state hemp policy, recruit supporters and encourage advocates to take action. Colleen assists advocates by providing education materials & resources and also assists advocates to utilize Vote Hemp's action alert system streamlining outreach. She is also focussed on social media content management, sustaining growth and fundraising to further the goals of the organization.

Contact

colleen@votehemp.com

Congressional Outreach



3k+

**Congressional staff
messages & visits**

Each Congressional member (535) has dedicated staff to handle issues that are important to their constituents. Vote Hemp takes a pro-active role in engaging these staff members and keeping them informed on the latest hemp news. Vote Hemp also delivers resources, info & products to these offices.

Messages: 2k

Office Visits: 1k+



100+

**meetings with key
Congressional offices**

Senate Meetings

60+

House Meetings

45+



23

**NEW Industrial
Hemp Farming Act
cosponsors**

New Senate Cosponsors

Sen. Gardner (R-CO), Sen. Daines (R-MT), Sen. Franken (D-MN), Sen. Bennet (D-CO), Sen. Tester (D-MT) & Sen. Baldwin (D-WI)

New House Cosponsors

Rep. Titus (D-NV), Rep. Huffman (D-CA), Rep. Swalwell (D-CA), Rep. Sanford (R-SC), Rep. Whitfield (R-KY), Rep. Benishek (R-MI), Rep. Connolly (D-VA), Rep. Perlmutter (D-CO), Rep. Speier (D-CA), Rep. Walden (R-OR), Rep. Courtney (D-CT), Rep. Lowey (D-NY), Rep. Coffman (R-CO), Rep. Ellmers (R-NC), Rep. Tipton (R-CO), Rep. Davis (R-IL), Rep. Hurt (R-VA) & Rep. Scott (D-VA)



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**House members
support hemp
research**

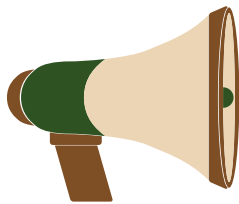
By way of the hemp research amendment to the FY 16 CJS Appropriations Act, this is a benchmark number of House members who support hemp's progress in the next year.



Legislative Liaison
Ben Droz

Contact
congress@votehemp.com

Ben joined Vote Hemp in 2008 and resides in Washington, DC. He is focussed on congressional outreach, engaging congressional staff & facilitating targeted meetings with key members of Congress. Ben provides materials, resources and communicates regularly with Hill staffers to keep them informed on industrial hemp issues. His efforts help identify strategies to earn additional co-sponsorship of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act and other important actions, like circulation of the most recent "Dear Colleague" letter to the USDA. He also organizes annual Hemp Lobby Days & coordinates advocate visits on the Hill. Ben is a leading voice for industrial hemp at the nation's capital.



The Industrial Hemp Farming Act (S. 134) will immediately create opportunities for jobs and business growth. It is critical

that we increase the number Senate and House cosponsors in order to pass federal legislation.

As a constituent stakeholder, you are in a unique position to educate and influence your Senators and Representative. It is really not as difficult as you might think. A carefully planned meeting can make a huge difference and Vote Hemp created this guide to make preparing and holding meetings with Congressional staff easy and effective.

Thank you for your activism on behalf of industrial hemp!

Building Relationships

- Members of Congress have offices in their district that will be convenient when you visit them in person. To find your closest district office, go to: www.VoteHemp.com/officials
- Begin building a relationship with your Congressional offices now if you haven't already. Like any relationship, it can take time to build rapport, through email, phone chats, and meetings. A few minutes for a phone call and email follow up can be a very effective start.
- When you call the district office, introduce yourself as a constituent and mention if you are a business owner or farmer. Ask which staff member handles industrial hemp and if you can speak with them. If they are not available, leave a short voice-mail asking them to call you back.
- Continue to stay in touch and follow up with short emails, links, and updates about hemp, whenever you have any news or updates that would be interesting including changes in state law or regulations.

Meeting in the District Office

- A face-to-face meeting with staff members is one of the most effective ways to educate your representatives and advocate for their support.
- A meeting should consist of an individual or small group of constituents. A farmer, a business owner, a political donor, a local leader (ie, county commissioner, delegate, etc), or representative from a state advocacy organization, will have the most impact.
- Reach out to your staff contact or the office scheduler via email or phone to request a meeting. If you need help finding the right contact, get in touch with Ben Droz: congress@votehemp.com
- You can ask when the Senator will be in town but understand that most meetings most often happen with staff. Work with the staffer or scheduler to find an ideal time. You can use the sample meeting request included at the end of this document.

Professionalism

- **Arrive to the meeting at least 5 minutes early.** Plan for unexpected delays due to traffic or finding a place to park.
- **Wear professional business attire** - a suit and tie or a dress for example.
- **Prepare beforehand** and learn about the Senator by checking Wikipedia, their website, or an article about them.
- **Print out the talking points and supporting materials for the meeting in advance.** This includes documents from our toolkit, literature from your company or organization, local news stories, and anything else that would help make your points. Product samples can also be very helpful.
- **Stay on message.** Focus on the talking points and don't stray from discussing industrial hemp. Avoid discussing other issues, especially where you may disagree. The meeting is your opportunity to make the case for industrial hemp.
- **Talk about how industrial hemp farming and/or manufacturing would benefit your county, city and state.** Discuss how it could drive job creation and spur economic development.
- You don't have to be an expert - a little relevant information can go a long way. **If you don't know an answer, this creates a nice opportunity for follow up.**



Meeting Agenda

- Introduce yourself and **build rapport by talking about your local area, with a short personal story.** Keep a local focus throughout the meeting.
- At the beginning or end of the meeting, exchange business cards.
- Discuss how your state law allows for licensed hemp farming.
- US Senate has a bill pending (S. 134) to authorize states to regulate commercial hemp farming. Share a copy of S. 134.
- **Tell them S. 134 was introduced by Sen. Wyden and has six bipartisan cosponsors:** Sen. McConnell (R-KY), Sen. Merkley (D-OR), Sen. Paul (R-KY), Sen. Gardner (R-CO), Sen. Franken (D-MN), Sen. Daines (R-MT)
- Explain how the market for hemp products is growing and there is big potential new market for farmers. **Give them a copy of the HIA market press release.**
- **Explain how access to seeds is a serious problem due to current law requiring DEA import permit.** Some profiteers are taking advantage and selling seed for outrageous prices. Lack of seed is limiting opportunities to start pilot programs.
- **DEA is not cooperating with states, and Kentucky had to file a lawsuit.** Some state departments of agriculture do not feel comfortable facilitating imports, leaving farmers stuck until S. 134 is approved.
- Current restrictions limiting to research and pilot programs don't allow most farmers to take full advantage of market opportunities.
- **Ask for your Senator's co-sponsorship of S. 134.**
- Meetings are typically 15-30 minutes. **Be concise and respectful of the staffers time.**
- **Make sure to pause and allow them to absorb the information and ask questions.**
- Make sure to articulate (and repeat) the ask, "I/we urge the Senator to become a cosponsor S 134, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act."

IMPORTANT: Follow Up

Following up is incredibly important. A short email after the meeting can go a long way.

Follow up on any unanswered questions. Provide links to any documents or other useful info.

Keep the conversation going with short emails with links, whenever local or hemp news stories come out.

Email Ben at: congress@votehemp.com to let us know how the meeting went.



2014 Annual Retail Sales for Hemp Products Estimated at \$620 Million

Hemp Foods and Body Care Retail Market in U.S. Achieves 21.2% Growth in 2014

12 Mar 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Hemp Industries Association (HIA), a non-profit trade association consisting of hundreds of hemp businesses, has released final estimates of the size of the 2014 U.S. retail market for hemp products. Data from market research supports an estimate of total retail sales of hemp food and body care products in the United States at \$200 million. Sales of popular hemp items like non-dairy milk, shelled seed, soaps and lotions have continued to skyrocket against the backdrop of the new hemp research provision in the Farm Bill, and increasing grassroots pressure to allow hemp to be grown domestically on a commercial scale once again for U.S. processors and manufacturers. The HIA has also reviewed sales of clothing, auto parts, building materials and various other products, and estimates the total retail value of hemp products sold in the U.S. in 2014 to be at least \$620 million.

The sales data on hemp foods and body care, collected by market research firm SPINS, was obtained from natural and conventional retailers, excluding Whole Foods Market, Costco and certain other key establishments, who do not provide sales data — and thus it underestimates actual sales by a factor of at least two and a half. According to the SPINS data, combined U.S. hemp food and body care sales grew in the sampled stores by 21.2% or \$14,020,239, over the previous year ending December 31, 2014 to a total of just over \$80,042,540. According to SPINS figures, sales in conventional retailers grew by 26.8% in 2014, while sales in natural retailers grew by 16.3%. Indeed, the combined growth of hemp retail sales in the U.S. continues steadily, as annual natural and conventional market percent growth has progressed from 7.3% (2011), to 16.5% (2012), to 24% (2013), to 21.2 in 2014.

“The HIA estimates the total retail value of all hemp products sold in the U.S. to be at least \$620 million for 2014,” says Eric Steenstra, Executive Director of the HIA. “Eleven new states have passed legislation and new businesses are rapidly entering the market now that American farmers in a handful of states are finally beginning to grow the crop legally. Challenges remain in the market and there is a need for Congress to pass legislation to allow farmers to grow hemp commercially in order for the market to continue its rapid growth,” continues Steenstra.

When the 2013 farm bill was signed into law in February of 2014, the hemp amendment to the farm bill, Sec. 7606 Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research, defined industrial hemp as distinct from marijuana in states where hemp is regulated under authorized hemp pilot programs. This was an historic moment in the longstanding effort to legalize hemp as the act asserts that industrial hemp is not psychoactive, having less than 0.3% tetrahydrocannabinol on a dry weight basis and therefore presenting no drug value.

The bill further allows for states that have already legalized the crop to cultivate hemp within the parameters of state agriculture departments and research institutions. In 2014, 1831 acres of hemp were licensed in Kentucky, Colorado and Vermont. Many licensees were unable to obtain seed in time to plant due to DEA seed import requirements. We estimate that approximately 125 acres of hemp crops were planted during 2014. Read the full text of the Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research amendment on the Vote Hemp website: http://www.votehemp.com/PDF/Pages_from_farm0127.pdf.

In January of 2015, The Industrial Hemp Farming Act was introduced in both the House and Senate, H.R. 525 and S. 134 respectively. If passed, the bill would remove all federal restrictions on the cultivation of industrial hemp, and remove its classification as a Schedule I controlled substance. Currently, 21 states may grow hemp per Sec. 7606 of the Farm Bill, including California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia.

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The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) represents the interests of the hemp industry and encourages the research and development of new hemp products. More information about hemp's many uses and hemp advocacy may be found at www.TheHIA.org and www.VoteHemp.com. DVD Video News Release featuring footage of hemp farming in other countries is available upon request by contacting Lauren Stansbury at 402-540-1208 or lauren@wearemovementmedia.com.



How We Grew the 6th Annual #HempWeek

1,600+
Total events
nationwide

1,288
Retailer
events

314
Grassroots
events

400+
Earned
media hits

40
*Bringing It
Home* hemp
film
screenings

26
Farm community
& spring planting
events

2,000+
Signatures
collected in
support of pro-
hemp policy

52
Cafes &
restaurants
offering hemp
menu items

Industrial
Hemp Farming
Act of 2015 was
reintroduced in
the U.S. House
& Senate

6 New states
passed hemp
farming bills
into law

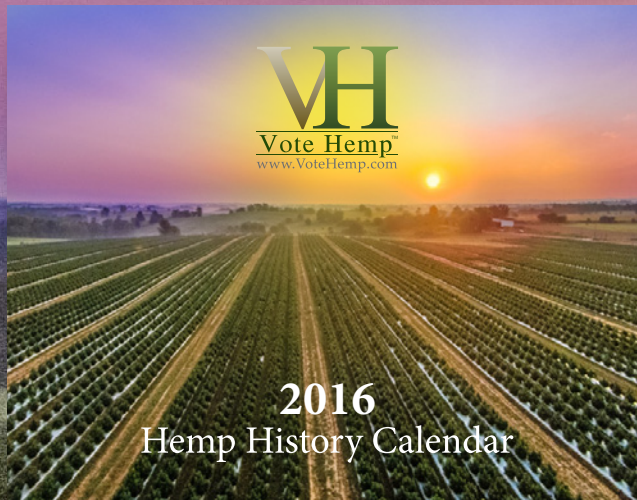
Hemp
Amendment to
CJS Appropriations
bill passes in
U.S. House
(242-183)

Hemp
Amendment to
CJS Appropriations
bill passes in
U.S. Senate
Appropriations
Committee
(30-0)

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- mini-calendars for previous & following months on each month
- original photography chosen by supporters of Vote Hemp.



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