

**Congressman Hakeem Jeffries**  
**Testimony on H.R. 2843 the “Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act of 2019”**  
**January 15, 2020**

Good Morning,

Thank you to Chairwoman Eshoo and Ranking Member Burgess for considering H.R. 2843, the “Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act” as a part of this hearing on “Cannabis Policies for the New Decade.”

While states have led the charge in legislating on cannabis over the past decade, it is important that Congress crafts federal policies and addresses the matters that are within our jurisdiction. In doing so, Congress must take a broad approach, considering a number of potential fixes to our current laws.

That is what the Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act strives to do. It enables states to act as labs of democracy and decide how to regulate marijuana in a way that makes the most sense for their residents, while taking federal action to allow for better information and enhanced safety. In addition to decriminalizing marijuana at the federal level, the Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act takes significant steps to address the harms our current marijuana laws have caused through the creation of grant programs and increased opportunities.

It makes targeted investments that are necessary to protect public health and safety, including research to better understand health impacts of marijuana, the effects of THC on the human brain and the efficacy of marijuana as a treatment for specific ailments. In order to ensure that marijuana businesses are not allowed to target children, this legislation also requires the promulgation of regulations that restrict advertising and promotion of products as is currently done with tobacco products.

As federal legislators, we must be thoughtful in our approach to updates in this space, and this hearing is significant in moving us forward. Thank you again for taking the time to discuss these issues and for considering this important legislation.