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August 30, 2018

Mr. James Carroll
Acting Director
Office of National Drug Control Policy
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Carroll:

I write to express my concerns regarding a recent news report that the White House has established a so-called Marijuana Policy Coordination Committee (“the Committee”).

According to this report, the Committee has instructed various federal departments to provide “data demonstrating the most significant negative trends” about marijuana. Once the Committee compiles these slanted reports, it will supposedly use them to brief the President on various “marijuana threats.”

Additionally, one of the Committee’s documents states:

“Staff believe that if the administration is to turn the tide on increasing marijuana use there is an urgent need to message the facts about the negative impacts of marijuana use, production, and trafficking on national health, safety, and security.”

The only way to “turn the tide” on any issue with the public is to be a credible voice. By cherry-picking data to support pre-ordained and misinformed conclusions on marijuana, the Trump administration has further eroded any credibility it had on this issue.

I am deeply concerned by this intentional effort to mislead the American people. At a time when we should be investing in objective and peer-reviewed scientific research on marijuana and the effects of legalization, the White House is instead using taxpayer money to spread a politically-driven narrative. What’s perhaps most unfortunate is that my state and others stand ready to work as partners with the federal government to gather the data and research necessary to ensure we are protecting public health and safety.

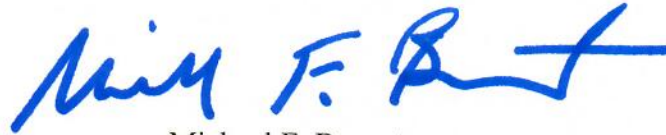
Unfortunately, the Committee’s work will further contribute to the Administration’s incoherent and backward-looking policy on marijuana enforcement and regulation.

It is my hope that the Administration will re-consider its effort to misuse data for political purposes rather than to support conclusions that are fully grounded in peer-reviewed science.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to follow up with me.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael F. Bennet". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Michael F. Bennet
U.S. Senator