



Marijuana Scheduling Stakeholder Meeting Comments

The Department of Health held a stakeholder meeting on November 20, 2015 to receive input from those interested in options for marijuana scheduling as required by the Governor's veto language in SSB 5052. Below are a summary of the comments organized by each of the options.¹

Option 1: Do nothing at this time.

- Disagree with this option. The federal controlled substances laws were not adopted legally. There was no public comment. Washington didn't adopt the Controlled Substances Act legally. The legislature just referenced the federal laws.
- Disagree with Option 1. This will force patients into the black market due to prices being too high. Access points are an issue.
- It should not stay on Schedule I. Schedule II for some products?
- Strange to list it as a Schedule I and sell it recreationally. It does not meet the criteria to be in Schedule I. The U.S. Government has patents in place. Pharmaceutical versions of synthetic marijuana exist. A lot of doctors and patients have said that the whole plant is more effective for their conditions. Can't say it is not useful for medical use. Does not seem to show potential for abuse.
- Doing nothing is not a good option. We should start pushing at the state level.
- We all know marijuana has medical benefits. We need to stop supporting that lie that it doesn't. We've got to start at the state level to get the federal government to move.
- This option doesn't work. It is the easiest option but there are issues. By keeping this in place we would not align with the federal "Cole memo" – it would increase the black market.
- I have found that folks get the best relief from marijuana for certain things. I have seen it work. Option 1 does not deal with the problem. This does not recognize the medicinal value.
- Cannabis is what healed me. Decriminalize it. It gives life. I am a nurse that lost my license after being raided for cannabis. It harms so many people having it in Schedule I.

Option 2: Re-schedule Marijuana to Schedule II – V or to a legend (prescription) drug.

- Disagree with this under current structure. Decide whether the Washington State Controlled Substance Act is real or if it is political. It doesn't give us what we need. It is a no go under the current set up.
- It doesn't work with current system. It is a non-starter and does not solve anything.

¹ The following comments are summaries of statements made by stakeholders. They do not reflect the position of the Department of Health.



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- Looking at the criteria for scheduling drugs, there could be an argument for marijuana fitting into Schedule V. One criteria there might be appropriate.
- This option is a no go. This perpetuates a lie. We need to represent the people. It is not a controlled substance.
- This option undermines all we have worked for. It would hand all the work over to large corporate interests. It would also put practitioners into violation.
- I don't like any option that takes away personal growing. It does not need to be in pharmacies.
- When I look at Schedule V drugs on Washington's Controlled Substances Act it is clear that cannabis does not relate to those substances.
- I am not for this as you cannot grow at home. I do not want to go back on pharmaceuticals.
- I was in a wheelchair and couldn't eat. This is medicinal. It should not be in a schedule.
- Look to our ancestors and the history of this plant. This has been discussed for a long time.

Option 3: Amend the Washington State Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to be consistent with I-502 and SB 5052 and Chapter 69.51A RCW. All other use would still be illegal.

- Oppose this option because you would still have to use it within the current regulated market. Enforcement penalties could still apply. We have to get rid of the exemption to the crime scheme. This raises prices. Laws should not be adopted by reference without public comment. Make it legal for adults.
- This is an herbal medication. The only solution is to get it removed from the federal schedule. We need to de-schedule and have the Washington Attorney General sue the Department of Justice and the federal government.
- Based on the criteria beer should be a Schedule IV. Marijuana is safer. There are non-scheduled drugs that have risks. Look at this scientifically. We don't schedule beer. We should de-schedule marijuana.
- I was raided in 2010 and charged for a crime. Documents were not in place to hold me. I don't see how anything changes from options 1 to 3. There is no science in these. Studies have shown this should be de-scheduled. Go back to this study for our work. None of these options are ones I want.
- This is not an option. It is a botanical herb.
- Referenced court case from 2015. With this we are not de-scheduling anything. It is still illegal in the state with how we have things written.
- Alcohol and tobacco is not scheduled and can harm and kill. This discriminates and will cause more suffering.



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- This is the best option of those presented. De-scheduling is the right direction to go. Commerce is inhibited by current status. If we make a statement perhaps other states will join us.
- Option 3 is the best of the three, but it doesn't quite do it right.
- Option 3 is best of what is presented, but it does not go far enough.
- I think we have a moral issue here. We need to educate people about this drug. We need to do something quickly with all the cities putting up bans.
- I would like to recommend Option 3. I understand it would be federally illegal, but this option would allow for home grows and work with the market we have set up. It would help educate non-users to make it legal. This would help change people's opinions.
- I am not in favor of this option. I am confused as to why our 1998 law is being destroyed. This is medicine. We need to be able to grow and make our own medicine.
- In favor of Option 3. It is more than a baby step. It would send a strong signal to the federal government to encourage them to change.
- Police could not interpret the law when I was raided. There needs to be clarity for them.
- Patients are the ones being hurt. Option 3 would only hurt us more.
- I support Option 3 because it is the closest thing to saying it has therapeutic value. Take it out of Schedule I please.
- Can't get behind Option 3 at all. No protection for patients.
- I am for de-scheduling. It is a drug but it has many other uses.

Comments on Other Options:

- Ask Attorney General to notify the feds that the Controlled Substances Act is illegal. It was not available to the public to comment. Same with the state Controlled Substances Act. Start over with a new law with good public comment and input.
- Take Option 3 and de-schedule it completely.
- Would favor de-schedule completely.
- Best option is to de-schedule.
- De-schedule. A commission should be created that includes patients, citizens, and the regulatory bodies dealing with this issue.
- De-schedule. Agree with others that this is not a legal law. If we leave it partially in plants and product can still be seized.



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- De-schedule. We are looking for health freedom. No one should have to ask the government in order to take a vitamin. Force from Washington state true legalization to the courts and the federal level. Go under the existing herbal botanical laws.
- Use Option 3 but de-schedule completely. Stop selective enforcement that goes on. Need something that is science based. It is safe and does not meet scheduling criteria. It is safer than alcohol and tobacco. Our laws should reflect it.
- Legalize it completely. Doctors need to be able to authorize without intimidation. People should be responsible when using cannabis. We need education and treatment available. All adults should be able to grow. Voters voted for legalization first. Worry more about people not business.
- The natural option is to de-schedule. Allow age 21 plus home grows. Allow community gardens and homeopathic centers. Remember it is a plant. Provide education necessary. This allows commerce. There is no threat by allowing people to grow at home.
- De-schedule is the way to go. Let the free market reign.
- Plant counts are not an exact science. I have never had two grows be the same. The best is to de-schedule for everyone. I feel it is discrimination.
- De-schedule and regulate it like tomatoes.
- Make an option that is succinct as possible. Otherwise law enforcement will find a loophole. Get rid of Schedule I penalties. We should not have to choose the best of the worst.
- None of the options presented are ones I feel we should use. These options all limit my ability to help patients.
- All options seem to be too narrow.