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ATTM: Letter to Congressional leaders

Western Regional Cannabis Business Alliance Launches to Advocate on behalf of Legal Cannabis State Marketplaces

American Trade Association for Cannabis and Hemp, Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Arizona form new regional business alliance as 60% of Americans now have access to legal cannabis state marketplaces

WASHINGTON – Today the Western Regional Cannabis Business Alliance (WRCBA) announced its formation on behalf of its members representing legal cannabis business owners across the country. At its formation, the WRCBA represents legal cannabis business owners in Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Arizona and the American Trade Association for Cannabis and Hemp.

“We are honored to join our industry peers in other regulated states’ regulated cannabis industries as we continue to advocate on behalf of Washington’s legal marketplace,” said **Jim Mullen, Washington CannaBusiness Board President**. “As a member of the Western Regional Cannabis Business Alliance, we will work to support cannabis laws, regulations and policies at the regional- and federal-levels of government that uphold the safety, viability and quality of legal state cannabis marketplaces. We look forward to our members continuing to invest in legal marketplaces created by overwhelming public approval, helping to create tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in state tax revenue.”

“As an industry member, I am truly excited to be a part of a coalition of business professionals and advocates that aim to shape and guide this growing industry,” said **Kc Franks, Cannabis Organization of Retail Establishments board member and owner of Lux Pot Shop**. “With the emergence of such strong state level regulation, I believe that our involvement and guidance is essential to the continued success of this safe, regulated and legal enterprise. With the formation of the Western Regional

Cannabis Business Alliance we now have multi-state representation with a unified front of cannabis industry experts. Moving forward we look for common sense regulation at both State and Federal levels."

In one of its first actions following its formation, the WRCBA sent a letter to Congressional leaders (attached) requesting language for the FY19 Appropriations Bill to be considered this month by Congress that would, "protect businesses that are upholding a safer, legal and regulated cannabis marketplace in our states." This language would not legalize cannabis at the federal level, but it would protect business owners, recreational consumers, and patients from the fear of federal action following Attorney General Jeff Sessions' rescinding of the Cole Memorandum. The language would read:

The Department of Justice shall not expend federal funds that would prevent states from implementing their own State laws that authorize the use, distribution, possession or cultivation of Cannabis.

Countless law-abiding businesses have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the State-regulated cannabis industry that experts estimate to be worth close to \$10 billion dollars today. In Washington, according to a study conducted by the Washington State Institute of Public Policy, more than 10,000 people are employed in the legal marketplace in our state as of 2016. The legal marketplace in Washington has generated almost \$1 billion in state tax revenue since its inception.

"The very existence of the cannabis industry hinges on state associations organizing together, combining advocacy efforts at the federal level, and speaking with one voice as we work to safeguard the marketplace. The American Trade Association for Cannabis & Hemp (ATACH) applauds the Western Regional Cannabis Business Alliance for its leadership and we are excited to join forces to advocate nationally on behalf of the industry," **said Michael Bronstein, Director, American Trade Association for Cannabis & Hemp.**

The WRCBA is comprised of state associations from Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Arizona committed to upholding the safety, viability and quality of their respective regulated cannabis marketplaces and strengthening a safer system than the black marketplace that strives to keep cannabis products away from minors.

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