



February 13, 2017

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Re: Failure to Respond to Information Quality Act Request For Correction

To Whom It May Concern:

On December 5, 2016, Americans for Safe Access (“ASA”) submitted an Information Quality Act (“IQA”) Request for Correction of Information Disseminated by Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Regarding Marijuana (Cannabis) (enclosed). ASA would like to thank the DEA for removing the document, “The Dangers and Consequences of Marijuana Abuse,” which was formerly available at: www.dea.gov/doc/dangers-consequences-marijuana-abuse.pdf. This document contained the majority of the inaccurate statements described in ASA’s Request.

However, neither the DEA nor the Department of Justice (DOJ) has actually responded to ASA’s Request. Moreover, every single one of the inaccurate statements formerly present in the recently removed Dangers and Consequences document, are currently present in the document, “The DEA Position on Marijuana,” available at:

https://www.dea.gov/docs/marijuana_position_2011.pdf. This document appears to be an earlier, almost identical draft of the “Dangers and Consequences of Marijuana Abuse.” ASA is under the impression that the DEA made an honest oversight by failing to remove this document. Thus, ASA respectfully requests that the DEA remove “The DEA Position on Marijuana” from its website as well.

Unfortunately, the DEA has yet to update or remove the document, “Drugs of Abuse,” available at: https://www.dea.gov/pr/multimedia-library/publications/drug_of_abuse.pdf#page=73. While



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this document contains important information regarding a variety of drugs, certain statements¹ in section “IX. Marijuana/Cannabis,” remain in violation of the objectivity and utility standards established by the IQA. These statements were discussed in ASA’s Request, yet have not been corrected or removed. Also, the DEA has recently disseminated another document, “Drug Fact Sheet Marijuana,” containing the very same aforementioned inaccurate statements present in “Drugs of Abuse.” “Drug Facts Sheet Marijuana” is available at: https://www.dea.gov/druginfo/drug_data_sheets/Marijuana.pdf.

Perhaps the inaccurate statements in these two documents also slipped through the cracks, or perhaps the DEA believes the statements contained in these documents do not violate the IQA objectivity and utility standards. But, without a substantive response from the DEA, ASA has no means of discovering which statements the DEA has determined are compliant with the IQA.

The DOJ Information Quality Guidelines allow the responsible DOJ component (*i.e.*, the DEA) 60 calendar days to respond to a request for correction.² ASA has waited 70 calendar days for a response, but to no avail. While ASA appreciates the DEA’s removal of “The Dangers and Consequences of Marijuana Abuse,” DEA misinformation regarding the health effects of cannabis remains publically available. It is crucial that the DEA correct its inaccurate statements, especially in light of Senator Jeff Sessions’s confirmation as Attorney General of the United States. Attorney General Sessions has made several statements demonstrating his beliefs that cannabis is a gateway drug and that its psychological effects are permanent. These beliefs are verifiably false, as confirmed by the DEA in its “Denial of Petition to Initiate Proceedings to

¹ “Researchers have also found an association between marijuana use and an increased risk of depression; an increased risk and earlier onset of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, especially for teens that have a genetic predisposition [...] Like tobacco smokers, marijuana smokers experience serious health problems such as bronchitis, emphysema, and bronchial asthma. Extended use may cause suppression of the immune system. Because marijuana contains toxins and carcinogens, marijuana smokers increase their risk of cancer of the head, neck, lungs and respiratory track.”

² <https://www.justice.gov/iqpr/information-quality>.

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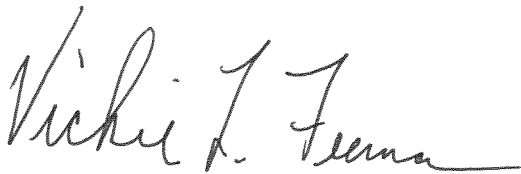
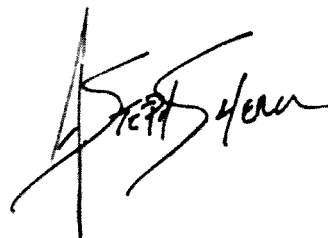
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Reschedule Marijuana.”³ As the top law enforcement official in the nation, Mr. Sessions must have access to accurate information based on current scientific data in order to make informed decisions regarding the enforcement (or non-enforcement) of federal drug laws. Allowing Mr. Sessions to make law enforcement decisions based on biased, out-of-date information does a tremendous disservice to ASA’s members and the American people at large.

Therefore, ASA respectfully requests that the DEA respond to its Request, and/or remove the remaining inaccurate statements from its website.

Dated: February 13, 2017

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vickie L. Feeman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steph Sherer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Vickie L. Feeman

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Orrick, Herrington, and Sutcliffe LLP

Steph Sherer

Executive Director for Petitioner

Americans for Safe Access

Enclosure

³ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/08/12/2016-17954/denial-of-petition-to-initiate-proceedings-to-reschedule-marijuana#p-81>.