

# NABCL Founder Natacha Andrews Esq.: Cannabis Rescheduling, a "Historic Step" But Comprehensive Reform Still Needed

CHARLOTTE, NC, UNITED STATES, May 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Association of Black Cannabis Lawyers (NABCL) recognizes the DEA's decision to reschedule cannabis from a Schedule I to a Schedule III controlled substance as a significant milestone. However, NABCL's Founder and Executive Director Natacha Andrews, Esq., emphasizes that more comprehensive legislative action, such as the revised Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA) re-introduced by Senator Chuck Schumer this week, is crucial for achieving true equity and repairing harms from the failed War on Drugs.

"Make no mistake, rescheduling is a historic step," stated Andrews, also the CEO of Charlotte based cannabis consulting firm Evergreen Solutions Group. "It opens doors for medical research, and potentially expands patient access, but Schumer's updated bill reinforces that rescheduling alone is not the finish line - it's our line of departure for the holistic reforms still desperately needed."



While the rescheduling announcement brings certain benefits, Andrews cautioned it falls short of addressing the core inequities perpetuated by decades of discriminatory cannabis criminalization. "It's a financial move that brings about some financial relief. But without more advocacy, those unjustly incarcerated with exorbitant sentences will still remain behind bars, those whose arrest led to deportation will still be separated from their loved ones, minority entrepreneurs will continue facing systemic barriers to entry in the legal market."

She stressed, "Rescheduling is not the same as legalization or decriminalization. This is why legislation such as CAOA, with its focus on restorative justice provisions including expungement

and investments in impacted communities, is so vital."

Andrews vowed that NABCL will continue its fight in lockstep with the aims of the new Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act to fully decriminalize cannabis, secure pardons and expungements, and ensure an equitable regulatory framework centered on empowering marginalized communities.

"Some may want us to believe the battle is over so demands for equity will dissipate," Andrews warned. "But NABCL stands alongside Senator Schumer and allies in Congress pushing for comprehensive cannabis reform rooted in repairing the damages to communities targeted by the drug war."

The rescheduling news came on the heels of NABCL's inaugural "Seat At The Table" event in Washington D.C., where key stakeholders, industry leaders, advocates and students united to chart an inclusive path forward as part of National Cannabis Week activities around the capital.

"When they don't give us a seat, we bring our own chair and make our voices impossible to ignore," said keynote speaker Cat Packer of the Drug Policy Alliance. "Events like Seat At The Table, coupled with legislative efforts to prioritize equity, are crucial for empowering communities to shape legalization on their own terms."

As the nation grapples with this seismic policy shift's implications, NABCL remains steadfast in ensuring marginalized voices drive an ethical, reparative legal cannabis industry - a vision shared by the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act.

"This fight is far from over," Andrews declared. "But NABCL will continue advocating relentlessly, hand-in-hand with our allies in this space, until true justice is achieved for all those who would benefit from the medicinal use of this plant who do not currently have access and all those targeted by the immoral War on Drugs. Now is the time and it's up to us to turn this momentum into meaningful, lasting change."

About Natacha Andrews Esq.:

Natacha Andrews, Esq., is an attorney, author, cannabis law professor, CEO of Evergreen Solutions Group, a NC based cannabis business consulting firm and the Founder/Executive Director of the National Association of Black Cannabis Lawyers (NABCL).

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About NABCL:

The National Association of Black Cannabis Lawyers leverages legal advocacy to promote diversity, inclusion and reparative justice in the cannabis industry.

For more information about NABCL and its ongoing initiatives, please visit [www.nabcl.com](http://www.nabcl.com).

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