

Congress Poised to Use Federal Purse Strings to Put the Brakes on Legalization of Recreational Marijuana in DC

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Just last month, DC voters approved a ballot initiative (by a margin of more than 2-to-1) to legalize possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use. The only hitch was that because of DC's special status, the ballot initiative can't become law until it passes through a 30-day Congressional review period. Until now, most thought that the review period would pass by uneventfully, but that all changed when a last-minute amendment was added Tuesday night to the must-pass [federal spending bill](#). For now, it appears that Congress will indeed block DC's ballot initiative from becoming law.

Here's the full text of the amendment: SEC. 809. (a) None of the Federal funds contained in this Act may be used to enact or carry out any law, rule, or regulation to legalize or otherwise reduce penalties associated with the possession, use, or distribution of any schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.) or any tetrahydrocannabinols derivative. (b) None of the funds contained in this Act may be used to enact any law, rule, or regulation to legalize or otherwise reduce penalties associated with the possession, use, or distribution of any schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.) or any tetrahydrocannabinols derivative for recreational purposes.

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