Today, the Department of Justice issued updated guidance to Federal prosecutors and law enforcement in light of state ballot initiatives in Washington and Colorado that legalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana by adults. Based on assurances that those states will impose an appropriately strict regulatory system, the Department is deferring its right to challenge the legalization laws at this time.

Marijuana is and remains illegal under federal law. The Department is committed to enforcing the CSA and will use its limited investigative and prosecutorial resources to address the most significant threats. The updated guidance being issued by the Department today reiterates eight areas as priorities for its continued enforcement of federal laws under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). The eight areas include:

- Preventing the distribution of marijuana to minors;
- Preventing revenue from the sale of marijuana from going to criminal enterprises, gangs and cartels;
- Preventing the diversion of marijuana from states where it is legal under state law in some form to other states;
- Preventing state-authorized marijuana activity from being used as a cover or pretext for the trafficking of other illegal drugs or other illegal activity;
- Preventing drugged driving and the exacerbation of other adverse public health consequences associated with marijuana use;
- Preventing the growing of marijuana on public lands and the attendant public safety and environmental dangers posed by marijuana production on public lands; and
- Preventing marijuana possession or use on federal property.

Thank you for remaining engaged with us in our work to reduce drug use and its consequences in America. It is important that we continue to expand prevention, treatment, and other smart law enforcement efforts to help make our communities healthier and safer.