

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

INDUSTRIAL HEMP POLICY - ADOPTED DECEMBER 15, 2000

COMMITTEE: AGRICULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**POLICY: CULTIVATION AND MARKETING OF INDUSTRIAL
HEMP**

1 Eleven states have passed bills or resolutions supporting the re-introduction of
2 industrial hemp into American agriculture (Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Illinois,
3 Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Vermont and Virginia)
4 since 1996. Over 30 countries, including all European Union nations and Canada,
5 currently permit and support the cultivation and production of industrial hemp and the
6 marketing of products made from same.

7 Today, industrial hemp products are being sold legally and with profit in the US,
8 with an estimated \$50 million domestic market. Industrial hemp has a multitude of
9 commercial applications, including food for animal and human consumption, oils and
10 creams for personal care products, textile fiber, building materials and composites,
11 paper, fuel and industrial lubricants, and many other uses. Domestic companies such
12 as Ralph Lauren, Daimler Chrysler, The Body Shop and Kimberly Clark are producing
13 hemp-based clothing, personal care products, car parts and paper for sale to
14 American consumers. Demand for these products has resulted in the US becoming
15 the largest importer of foreign-grown hemp-based materials in the world. Worldwide
16 hemp production has risen 24% during 1994-98 to supply this market (does not
17 include Canadian acreage). Federal barriers to the cultivation and production of
18 industrial hemp prevent American farmers from profiting from this agriculturally based
19 international market.

20 The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) strongly urges the U.S.
21 Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and
22 the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to collaboratively develop and
23 adopt an official definition of industrial hemp, as per those nations currently producing

24 hemp. NCSL also strongly urges Congress to amend US Code sections 21 U.S.C.
25 Sec. 812 (10) and 21 U.S.C. Sec.. 841 to distinguish between industrial hemp and
26 marijuana varieties of cannabis as they relate to production, possession, delivery, and
27 intended use.

28 NCSL requests the USDA and the DEA to review the procedures under which
29 their Canadian counterparts are authorized to sanction the commercial development
30 of industrial hemp. NCSL also strongly urges Congress statutorily to direct the DEA to
31 revise its policies to be less restrictive and to allow states to establish state regulatory
32 programs, thus fostering the development of domestic hemp production by American
33 farmers and manufacturers.

34 Toward this end, a copy of this resolution will be sent to members of the U.S.
35 Congress, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Acting DEA director Donnie R. Marshall,
36 the office of ONDCP, and the President of the United States.