

Biden Pardons All Federal Convictions of Simple Marijuana Possession



President Joe Biden.

Today's mass pardon marks a milestone for our community and a historic step in the right direction.

October 7, 2022. Rachel Abela

I'm a Toronto-based content writer with an honors diploma in Artist Management. Post-graduation, I began writing for the trailblazing west coast independent music blog BuzzMusic LA. I'm a passionate cannabis advocate and have watched Canada become a role model for federal legalization since enacting the Cannabis Act in 2018. I firmly believe that anyone of any age can benefit from utilizing cannabis or hemp-based products in their everyday lives, psychoactive or not. President Biden has heard our community's cries and is finally taking action.

The President of the United States announced today that he is pardoning all

simple marijuana possession offenses and ordering a review of federal cannabis laws. What seems as minor as possessing pot landed roughly 6,500 individuals in federal prison, all of whom were pardoned today. However, the President admitted to the country's harsh laws and now claims it is time for a change.

"Too many lives have been upended because of our failed approach to marijuana," said Biden. "It's time that we right these wrongs."

The President's pardons involve individuals charged with simple marijuana possession in federal prisons and the District of Columbia.

That said, there are still thousands of individuals in state prisons or local jails for the same thing.

"Just as no one should be in a federal prison solely due to the possession of marijuana, no one should be in a local jail or state prison for that reason, either," Biden demanded.

He urged the public that the following three steps will end the "failed approach" the country has taken towards cannabis:

- Pardoning all federal offenses for simple marijuana possession
- Calling on all state governors to do the same
- Reviewing how cannabis is scheduled at the federal level

Joe Biden added in his statement that cannabis is classified as a Schedule I drug, "the same as heroin and LSD, and more serious than fentanyl. It makes no sense."

He called on the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General to review how cannabis is scheduled under federal law. While the 6,500 individuals with simple possession were pardoned today, thousands more were also pardoned under the District of Columbia.

However, the pardons only apply to individuals who were legally in the United States and were U.S. citizens when they were convicted. Although thousands of voices still need to be heard and justice needs to be served, Biden's move today marks a milestone in our fight to decriminalize cannabis and grant all of our people pardons at long last.

Individuals pardoned today will rightfully reclaim their civil and political rights, people who were "denied employment, housing, or educational opportunities as a

result” of simple marijuana possession, said Biden. He declared that today’s mass pardon “will remove this burden on them.”