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**Cc:** Jeannie Lowell

**Subject:** Organized Crime and Legalized Marijuana

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

This morning in his committee testimony, Michael Schirling claimed that organized crime has benefitted from marijuana legalization in other states.

This claim is completely false, and the facts tell a starkly different story, as highlighted by a recent [Washington Post article](#).

Virtually all drugs controlled by Mexican cartels enter the US through our Southwest border with Mexico (naturally). According to the US Border Patrol, last year, marijuana seizures along that border fell to their lowest point since at least 2006. In 2009, border control agents seized nearly 4 million pounds of marijuana along that border, but only 1.5 million pounds in 2015, despite a sharp increase in patrols along that border over the past 10 years.

This 60% reduction is directly attributable to the sharp increase of state-licensed marijuana cultivation in major markets like California, Colorado and Washington. The cartels aren't profiting from legalization, they are suffering from it.

Even Michael Botticelli, the so-called federal "Drug Czar" and an ardent prohibitionist, concurred in this judgment, telling the US Senate last year that the reduction in drug seizures "suggests that people using marijuana in the United States may be increasingly obtaining marijuana from domestic sources".

Please do not let baseless assertions sway your judgment. The facts are clear: the drug cartels are the first and biggest casualty of legalization.

With best regards,  
Dave Silberman, Esq.  
Middlebury, Vt.