EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

February 10, 2012

Ms. Michele Leonhart, Administrator
Drug Enforcement Administration
8701 Morrissette Drive
Springfield, VA 22152

Subject: *Rulemaking petition to reclassify cannabis for medical use from a Schedule I controlled substance to a Schedule II*

Dear Ms. Leonhart:

I write in support of the petition that Governor Chafee and Governor Gregoire recently submitted to initiate rulemaking proceedings for the reclassification of medical cannabis (also known as marijuana) from Schedule I to Schedule II of the CSA.

Like my two colleagues, I am also concerned that patients with serious medical conditions who could benefit from medical use of cannabis do not have a safe and consistent source of the drug. The divergence in state and federal law creates a situation where there is no regulated and safe system to supply legitimate patients who may need medical cannabis.

More to the point, it is clear that the long-standing classification of medical use of cannabis in the United States as an illegal Schedule I substance is fundamentally wrong and should be changed. The federal government could quickly solve the issue if it reclassified cannabis for medical use from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule II drug, which I believe the petition provides substantiated peer-reviewed scientific evidence to support.

The solution lies with the federal government. I urge the DEA to initiate rulemaking proceedings to reclassify medical cannabis as a Schedule II drug so qualifying patients who follow state law may obtain the medication they need through the traditional and safe method of physician prescribing and pharmacy dispensing.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor, State of Hawaii

cc: The Honorable Eric Holder, U.S. Attorney General
       The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
       The Honorable Margaret Hamburg, M.D., FDA Commissioner