



Jurisprudence Section – 2009

E16 H.R. 5843 — “Personal Use of Marijuana by Responsible Adults Act of 2008:” A New Federal Approach to the Decriminalization of Our Most Prevalent Drug

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After attending this presentation, attendees will view the text of the proposed legislation along with the following: pros and cons of federal legalization; state approaches to decriminalization; international approaches to decriminalization; political responses to the proposed bill; and public opinion regarding this bill.

This presentation will impact the forensic community by presenting information on the proposed bill that will allow members of the community to make informed recommendations to their respective representatives.

On April 17, 2008, Representatives Barney Frank (D-MA) and Ron Paul (R-TX) introduced H.R. 5843, the “Personal Use of Marijuana by Responsible Adults Act of 2008,” a bill which would decriminalize possession of marijuana for personal use. Although this bill is only in the first stage of becoming legislation, it is a bill that has a long and tumultuous past behind it.

This presentation will present the proposed bill in its original language. The simple text of this bill is quite deceptive considering the complex issues swirling around it. Public health and law enforcement issues will be addressed, government responses will be outlined, including state and international decriminalization laws, and political arguments for and against the bill will be presented alongside public opinion.

The goal of this presentation is to bring awareness to the decriminalization movement and to educate attendees so that they may come to an informed opinion on this political issue.

Marijuana, Decriminalization, House Bill