

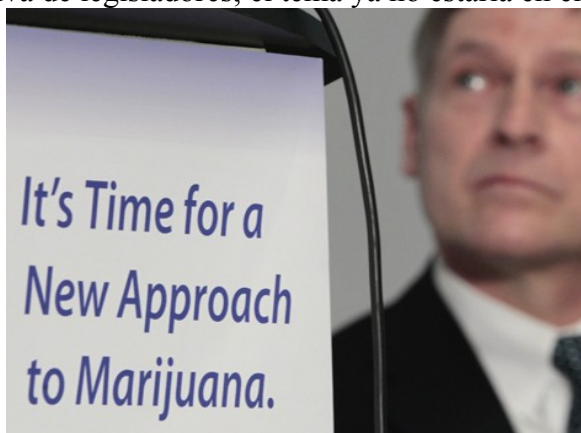
Abren vía para legalizar la mariguana en EU

La Jornada/David Brooks

24-Junio-2011

Tags Relacionados: [legalizacion](#), [mariguana](#), [estados unidos](#), [congreso](#)

Iniciativa de legisladores; el tema ya no estaría en el ámbito federal, sino estatal



Iniciativa de legisladores; el tema ya no estaría en el ámbito federal, sino estatal.

Foto: Vanguardia/Especial

Nueva York. Por primera vez en la historia, legisladores de ambos partidos introdujeron hoy un proyecto de ley para acabar con la prohibición federal de la mariguana.

El poderoso y veterano representante demócrata Barney Frank, de Massachussets, y su colega libertario y precandidato presidencial republicano Ron Paul, de Texas, junto con varios de sus colegas de la cámara baja, anunciaron el proyecto de ley.

En una teleconferencia con reporteros, Frank afirmó que la legislación se resume en que *"no creemos que el gobierno federal deba estar involucrado en fiscalizar a adultos por fumar mariguana ... eso es algo que debe determinar cada estado"*.

En los hechos, el proyecto de ley pondría fin a la guerra federal contra la droga y permitiría que los estados determinaran su legalización, regulación y control sin interferencia de las autoridades federales. Entre los otros patrocinadores iniciales están los veteranos representantes John Conyers, de Michigan, y Barbara Lee, de California, y sus colegas Jared Polis, de Colorado, y Steve Cohen, de Tenesi.

Frank argumentó que no hay suficiente capacidad carcelaria ni autoridades judiciales para continuar persiguiendo a personas que sólo consumen mariguana por gusto personal o razones médicas. Frank, como sus colegas, dice apoyar los esfuerzos por disuadir a los ciudadanos de consumir bebidas alcohólicas, fumar tabaco y mariguana, pero, subrayó, "la prohibición no es una manera muy efectiva de abordar estos asuntos".

La policía fiscalizó a más de 800 mil personas por consumir marihuana en 2009, según la FBI, y los arrestos por ese motivo representan más de la mitad de las detenciones por drogas en el país. Más de 20 millones han sido arrestadas en relación con la cannabis de 1965 a la fecha, 5 millones en la década pasada, y de estos totales, 90 por ciento han sido sólo por posesión. Según cifras del gobierno, 100 millones de estadounidenses han consumido marihuana (incluyendo al actual presidente), y uno de cada 10 lo hace de manera rutinaria.

Según la propuesta de ley para derogar la prohibición, el gobierno federal quedaría obligado a respetar las decisiones y leyes estatales sobre el uso y regulación del producto. Unos 14 estados han despenalizado el consumo de marihuana, y 16 estados y el distrito de Columbia (Washington) han legalizado su uso médico, según organizaciones que promueven estas medidas, como la Alianza sobre Política de Drogas.

Frank, liberal y famoso por sus ácidas críticas a las políticas conservadoras, indicó que está *"harto de la hipocresía de políticos"* que consumen alcohol, tabaco y marihuana en privado pero persiguen a otros por hacerlo.

Interrogado sobre la opinión de gobernantes extranjeros, como el presidente Felipe Calderón, de que la legalización de la marihuana en este país sólo beneficiaría a los narcotraficantes mexicanos, Frank respondió que para ellos no es materia de discusión si esta propuesta beneficiará a México o no. *"Él (Calderón) debe hacer lo que es correcto para México y yo haré lo que es correcto en Estados Unidos"*, dijo. A la vez, añadió, es un hecho que cuando algo es ilegal en un mercado a ciertos productores les conviene más que permanezca así. Por lo demás, al legalizar la marihuana se produciría un giro en el mercado, donde tal vez habrá mayor preferencia por esa droga legal y regulada que por sustancias mucho más peligrosas, como la cocaína.

Para el representante demócrata Polis, *"la guerra contra las drogas no ha funcionado, y la marihuana está más al alcance que nunca"*. Por lo tanto, argumentó, es importante que los estados decidan cómo abordar el manejo de esta droga. Su colega Cohen subrayó que es *"asunto de libertad"* personal, y que el gobierno federal no debe dedicar recursos a la actual prohibición. *"La marihuana tiene un gran efecto sobre los expendios de helados y los de donas, pero no en el crimen ... en eso es muy parecida al alcohol"*, y por lo tanto, debe ser regulada de la misma manera.

Cohen y Frank subrayaron que *"el pueblo está mucho más avanzado en esto que los legisladores"*, lo cual se comprueba en referendos estatales y encuestas.

Aunque nadie cree que el proyecto será aprobado a corto plazo, Frank indicó que la intención es que sea un vehículo para generar debate y educar a los legisladores.

Con todo, tiene un gran contenido simbólico, tanto por el alto perfil de sus promotores (Frank y Paul son figuras nacionalmente reconocidas) como por la atención que está generando en los medios masivos.

El anuncio se da poco después de que una agrupación internacional de destacadas figuras políticas y empresariales –*la Comisión Global de Política de Drogas*– emitió un informe que declaró a la guerra contra las drogas *"un fracaso"* y llamó a crear un nuevo paradigma en la lucha contra el narcotráfico que incluya el fin de las políticas de prohibición. Poco después, en un artículo publicado en el New York Times, el ex presidente Jimmy Carter también declaró el fracaso de la guerra contra las drogas y avaló las recomendaciones de esta comisión.

CONGRESSMAN BARNEY FRANK
THE FOURTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS



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Los Angeles Times

Ron Paul and Barney Frank: End the pot prohibition

By Charles Riley @CNNMoney June 22, 2011: 6:12 PM ET



PHOTO: WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Ron Paul and Barney Frank are teaming up

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul and outspoken Massachusetts Democrat Barney Frank want to get the federal government out of the marijuana regulation business.

States should make their own rules concerning the leafy green stuff, and regulate it themselves, the pair propose in legislation that will be introduced Thursday.

The bill would allow the Feds to continue enforcing cross-border or inter-state smuggling, but states would set their own laws, and people could grow and sell marijuana in places that choose to make it legal.

The bill is, of course, a longshot. But making it a law isn't the whole point, according to Morgan Fox, communications manager at the Marijuana Policy Project.

"A bill like this is going to get talked about quite a bit," Fox said. "I think it will spark a strong debate in the media, and we hope to get some [House] floor time for it."

The bill is co-sponsored by Democratic Reps. John Conyers of Michigan, Steve Cohen of Tennessee, Jared Polis of Colorado and Barbara Lee of California.



0:00 / 1:19 War on Drugs: 40 years, \$1 trillion

The bill's introduction comes 40 years after the United States began its "war on drugs" and just a few days after former President Jimmy Carter wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* titled "Call Off the Global Drug War."

In the op-ed, Carter laments a shift from what he calls the more balanced drug policies 1970s toward "futile efforts to control drug imports from foreign countries."

"Drug policies here are more punitive and counterproductive than in other democracies, and have brought about an explosion in prison populations," Carter wrote.

Meanwhile, Ron Paul's status as a declared candidate for the presidency is likely to bring attention to the bill. Frank's office confirmed to CNNMoney the bill will be introduced Thursday.

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Ron Paul, Barney Frank: Legalize it

POLITICO

Published 05:11 a.m., Thursday, June 23, 2011

POLITICO

A group of House members led by Reps. [Ron Paul](#) (R-Texas) and [Barney Frank](#) (D-Mass.) plan to introduce legislation Thursday that would legalize the use of marijuana and allow states to develop their own rules on the drug's use within their borders.

Modeled on the amendment to the U.S. Constitution that repealed the prohibition of alcohol, the legislation is being cast by the Marijuana Policy Project as the "the first bill ever introduced in Congress to end federal marijuana prohibition."

The bill would let states legalize, regulate and tax marijuana. It would also "reprioritize federal resources" away from the enforcement of anti-marijuana laws, limiting the federal government's role in combating cross-border and interstate smuggling, as well as in fighting the growth, use and sale of the drug.

Other sponsors of the bill are Reps. [John Conyers](#) (D-Mich.), [Steve Cohen](#) (D-Tenn.), [Jared Polis](#) (D-Colo.) and [Barbara Lee](#) (D-Calif.). But, because Paul has signed on, MPP is promoting the legislation as a "bipartisan" effort.



Wednesday, Jun 22, 2011 15:45 ET

Barney Frank and Ron Paul team up to legalize marijuana

The expensive, unjust war on drugs brings a House liberal and libertarian together

By [Alex Pareene](#)



AP

Ron Paul and Rep. Barney Frank

Ron Paul and Barney Frank have teamed up again (after their successful [joint HuffPo editorial](#) of 2010) to introduce legislation legalizing marijuana. Not decriminalizing it, but [actually totally legalizing it](#). Wouldn't that be wild?

It is being billed as "bipartisan legislation" but obviously Ron Paul is the only Republican co-sponsor. According to the Marijuana Policy Project: "The legislation is the first bill ever introduced in Congress to end federal marijuana prohibition."

On this, the ([disputed](#)) 40th anniversary of the War on Drugs, basically every thinking person agrees that marijuana prohibition is an expensive failure. But this will probably not even get a floor debate in the House of Representatives. Or maybe I'm wrong! We'll see!

Alex Pareene writes about politics for Salon. Email him at apareene@salon.com and follow him on [Twitter@pareene](#) More: [Alex Pareene](#)

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Ron Paul, Barney Frank to jointly offer bill to end war on weed

June 22, 2011 | 5:09 pm



Congressmen Ron Paul, Barney Frank and others will introduce legislature Thursday that aims to end a major part of the war on drugs -- namely the battle against marijuana.

Reps. Paul (R-Texas) and Frank (D-Mass.), though technically on opposite sides of the aisle, have often spoken out against the war on drugs and will propose a bill "tomorrow ending the federal war on marijuana and letting states legalize, regulate, tax, and control marijuana without federal interference," according to a statement from the [Marijuana Policy Project via Reason](#).

The bill would allow the individual states to decide how they want to deal with pot. Currently the federal government bogarts U.S. law, oftentimes arresting owners and employees of medical

marijuana facilities, for example, who thought they were operating legally under city, county and/or state laws.

"The legislation would limit the federal government's role in marijuana enforcement to cross-border or inter-state smuggling, allowing people to legally grow, use or sell marijuana in states where it is legal," according to the MPP statement.

The legislation, co-sponsored by Rep. **John Conyers** (D-Mich.), Rep. **Steve Cohen** (D-Tenn.), Rep. **Jared Polis** (D-Colo.), and Rep. **Barbara Lee** (D-Oakland), is the first of its kind to be proposed in Congress that would end the 73-year-old federal marijuana prohibition that began with the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937.

Although Frank insists that this "is not a legalization bill," it will be an excellent test for those in Congress who claim to be for a limited, smaller, federal government -- one that gives more power to the states whenever possible as Paul and the "tea party" have rallied for over the last few years.

If the bill somehow makes it through both houses of Congress, it would be interesting to see if President Obama would sign it, seeing as the president's feelings on the controversial matter have been hazy.

"We need to rethink and decriminalize our marijuana laws," [Obama said in Feb. 2008](#). "But I'm not somebody who believes in legalization of marijuana. What I do believe is that we need to rethink how we're operating in the drug war. Currently, we're not doing a good job."

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[Rep. Steve Cohen calls the war on drugs 'insane,' notes how pot helped a Navy SEAL](#)

-- Tony Pierce

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Photo: A Canadian soldier from the 6th Platoon, Bulldog Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Royal Regiment, walks through a field of marijuana plants during a patrol in the Panjwai district of Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan. Credit:REUTERS/Baz Ratner

The Opinion Pages

OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

Call Off the Global Drug War

By JIMMY CARTER

Published: June 16, 2011

Atlanta

IN an extraordinary new [initiative](#) announced earlier this month, the Global Commission on Drug Policy has made some courageous and profoundly important recommendations in a report on how to bring more effective control over the illicit drug trade. The commission includes the former presidents or prime ministers of five countries, a former secretary general of the United Nations, human rights leaders, and business and government leaders, including Richard Branson, George P. Shultz and Paul A. Volcker.

The report describes the total failure of the present global antidrug effort, and in particular America's "war on drugs," which was declared 40 years ago today. It notes that the global consumption of opiates has increased 34.5 percent, cocaine 27 percent and cannabis 8.5 percent from 1998 to 2008. Its primary recommendations are to substitute treatment for imprisonment for people who use drugs but do no harm to others, and to concentrate more coordinated international effort on combating violent criminal organizations rather than nonviolent, low-level offenders.

These recommendations are compatible with United States drug policy from three decades ago. In a [message to Congress](#) in 1977, I said the country should decriminalize the possession of less than an ounce of [marijuana](#), with a full program of treatment for addicts. I also cautioned against filling our prisons with young people who were no threat to society, and summarized by saying: "Penalties against possession of a drug should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself."

These ideas were widely accepted at the time. But in the 1980s President Ronald Reagan and Congress began to shift from balanced drug policies, including the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts, toward futile efforts to control drug imports from foreign countries.

This approach entailed an enormous expenditure of resources and the dependence on police and military forces to reduce the foreign cultivation of marijuana, coca and opium poppy and the production of cocaine and heroin. One result has been a terrible escalation in drug-related violence, corruption and gross violations of human rights in a growing number of Latin American countries.

The commission's facts and arguments are persuasive. It recommends that governments be encouraged to experiment "with models of legal regulation of drugs ... that are designed to undermine the power of organized crime and safeguard the health and security of their citizens." For effective examples, they can look to policies that have shown promising results in Europe, Australia and other places.

But they probably won't turn to the United States for advice. Drug policies here are more punitive and counterproductive than in other democracies, and have brought about an [explosion in prison](#)

[populations](#). At the end of 1980, just before I left office, 500,000 people were incarcerated in America; at the end of 2009 the number was nearly 2.3 million. There are 743 people in prison for every 100,000 Americans, a higher portion than in any other country and seven times as great as in Europe. Some 7.2 million people are either in prison or on probation or parole — more than 3 percent of all American adults!

Some of this increase has been caused by mandatory minimum sentencing and “three strikes you’re out” laws. But about three-quarters of new admissions to state prisons are for nonviolent crimes. And the single greatest cause of prison population growth has been the war on drugs, with the number of people incarcerated for nonviolent drug offenses increasing more than twelvefold since 1980.

Not only has this excessive punishment destroyed the lives of millions of young people and their families (disproportionately minorities), but it is wreaking havoc on state and local budgets. Former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger pointed out that, in 1980, 10 percent of his state’s budget went to higher education and 3 percent to prisons; in 2010, almost 11 percent went to prisons and only 7.5 percent to higher education.

Maybe the increased tax burden on wealthy citizens necessary to pay for the war on drugs will help to bring about a reform of America’s drug policies. At least the recommendations of the Global Commission will give some cover to political leaders who wish to do what is right.

A few years ago I worked side by side for four months with a group of prison inmates, who were learning the building trade, to renovate some public buildings in my hometown of Plains, Ga. They were intelligent and dedicated young men, each preparing for a productive life after the completion of his sentence. More than half of them were in prison for drug-related crimes, and would have been better off in college or trade school.

To help such men remain valuable members of society, and to make drug policies more humane and more effective, the American government should support and enact the reforms laid out by the Global Commission on Drug Policy.

Jimmy Carter, the 39th president, is the founder of the Carter Center and the winner of the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize.

A version of this op-ed appeared in print on June 17, 2011, on page A35 of the New York edition with the headline: Call Off the Global Drug War.

