

Pot industry takes cause to Washington

By Rob Hotakainen, McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON – The cannabis industry has flexed its muscles in 15 states, including California, where it's legal to smoke marijuana for medical purposes.

Now the industry is ready to go to work in Washington.

A new trade group, called the National Cannabis Industry Association, aims to bring together sellers, growers and manufacturers and to promote pot on Capitol Hill.

“Our intent is to be the go-to organization in Washington for this industry,” said Aaron Smith, the group's executive director.

For the past five years, Smith worked as California director of the Marijuana Policy Project.

“Coming out of California and expanding into this national field is pretty exciting,” he said. “It's pretty clear that the medical marijuana industry is becoming recognized more and more by the mainstream as a fully legitimate part of the economy.”

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