

Opinion: Finding a cure for pains of medicinal marijuana

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There is no ideal solution to get California out of its medical marijuana quagmire. But two steps would be a huge improvement and help fix much of what is broken with Proposition 215, approved by voters 15 years ago Saturday.

If we're going to have medical marijuana, more research is needed on what diseases and conditions can be treated, what doses work best and how the drug can be most safely ingested.

And that means getting marijuana off the federal government's Schedule 1 list of drugs. What's already known shows that marijuana does not belong in the same category as cocaine and heroin – drugs with high potential for abuse but without any medical benefit whatsoever.

This reasonable reform was recommended by the California Medical Association, which took the bold step last month in passing a resolution calling for legalization, strict regulation and, above all, more research.

Reclassifying marijuana would lessen the conflict between federal law and California and the 15 other states that have since allowed medical marijuana. A bill introduced in Congress this year would go even further, removing marijuana entirely from the list of controlled substances. While not legalizing marijuana, HR 2306 would limit federal enforcement to international and interstate smuggling and would let the states regulate pot.

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