

DEA accused of obstructing researching benefits of pot

By Renee Lewis, Aljazeera America

The Drug Enforcement Administration has maintained marijuana's classification as a harmful drug with no medical benefits despite scientific evidence to the contrary, a report said, adding that the agency has also obstructed research that could lead to the substance's reclassification.

"The DEA impedes research by abusing its discretionary powers over the scheduling process, making it difficult to obtain marijuana for research purposes. We recommend taking away the DEA's power over drug scheduling and access to drugs for research," Ethan Nadelmann, executive director of the Drug Policy Alliance, said last week.

The report, "The DEA: Four Decades of Impeding and Rejecting Science," released by the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies and DPA, calls on the DEA to end its "unjustifiable" monopoly of the supply of research grade marijuana available for federally approved research.

The DEA has ignored calls to reschedule marijuana – which is currently called a Schedule 1 drug meaning it has no known medical value and is on par with drugs like heroin and crack.

Medical marijuana advocates are calling for a rescheduling to Schedule 2 – where the Food and Drug Administration would regulate it as a prescription medicine, allowing easier access to medical grade cannabis for scientific research, the study said.

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