

States mull 'sanctuary' status for marijuana businesses

By Becky Bohrer, AP

Taking a cue from the fight over immigration, some states that have legalized marijuana are considering providing so-called sanctuary status for licensed pot businesses, hoping to protect the fledgling industry from a shift in federal enforcement policy.

Just hours after U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced on Jan. 4 that federal prosecutors would be free to crack down on marijuana operations as they see fit, Jesse Arreguin, the mayor in Berkeley, summoned city councilman Ben Bartlett to his office with a novel idea.

Berkeley was already the first city in the nation to formally declare itself a sanctuary city on immigration, barring city officials from cooperating with federal authorities. Why not do the same thing with marijuana? Last month, it did.

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