



## FACT SHEET

Project SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) is a new marijuana policy initiative based on public health. Chaired by former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy, Project SAM is a bipartisan alliance of lawmakers, scientists, and other concerned citizens who want to move beyond simplistic dichotomies of “incarceration versus legalization” and instead focus on practical changes to marijuana policy that neither demonizes users nor legalize drugs. Former George W. Bush Speechwriter, Newsweek/Daily Beast columnist David Frum, Harvard Professor Sharon Levy, MD, University of Kansas public health specialist Kimber Richter, PhD, MPH, Colorado chapter President of the American Academy of Pediatrics Kathryn Wells, former Obama and Bush advisor Kevin Sabet, PhD, and others also serve on the board of SAM.

SAM focuses on a “third way” approach to marijuana, and will be working with state partners to reach the public on the local level. SAM provides an avenue of leadership to discuss responsible marijuana policy.

### **Project SAM will focus on four main goals:**

- (1) To inform public policy with the science of today’s marijuana.
- (2) To reduce the unintended consequences of current marijuana policies, such as lifelong stigma due to arrest.
- (3) To prevent the establishment of “Big Marijuana” — and a 21st-Century tobacco industry that would market marijuana to children. Those are the very likely results of legalization.
- (4) To promote research on marijuana in order to obtain FDA-approved, pharmacy-dispensed, cannabis-based medications.

### **SAM will complete the following actions:**

- (a) Convene a bipartisan, Blue Ribbon commission of experts to examine U.S. marijuana policies and recommend courses of action.
- (b) Create model state and federal marijuana laws that emphasize health and education interventions or treatment, and strike an appropriate balance between public safety and public health goals.
- (c) Work with the Food and Drug Administration to develop a program to expedite research into marijuana’s potential medical utility as well as offer non-smoked marijuana extracts to the seriously ill before such medications are approved.
- (d) Engage in public information campaigns focused on the scientific data on marijuana use, especially for youth, and on the potential impact of a tobacco industry marketing marijuana.

- (e) Convene public dialogues in disadvantaged communities to solicit input about how to better reform current marijuana policies, increase social justice, and reduce incarceration.