SAM CHAIRMAN PATRICK KENNEDY BRIEFS ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AT CAMP DAVID ON TROUBLING DATA FROM COLORADO

New report released by SAM reveals problems with legalization, including increased marijuana positives among employees, marijuana advertisements, new data on marijuana’s effects on the brain, and tobacco company interest in marijuana e-cigarettes.

DENVER, CO – Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM) Chairman, Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy, is at Camp David today briefing top Administration officials on the marijuana situation in Colorado. The information he is sharing will be released today in a report, 4/20 Report Card for Colorado, days before thousands of people gather in Colorado for statewide marijuana celebrations on April 20. This is the first in a series of reports SAM will be publishing. Future reports will reveal data on hospitalizations, poisonings, and other issues.

SAM’s 4/20 Report Card for Colorado was reviewed by SAM’s scientific advisory board, which is comprised of some of the world’s top public health researchers on marijuana.

Today, SAM Co-Founder and Chairman, former U.S. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy reported the news to top U.S. administration officials at Camp David. “Sadly, Colorado is now known for a new kind of Rocky Mountain high,” said Kennedy. “Taking their cues from Big Tobacco, a massive marijuana industry has emerged to downplay the significant risk of massive commercialization and increased marijuana use. It’s important the Administration understands what is happening on the ground in Colorado.”
The SAM 4/20 Report Card includes troubling information such as:

- 30% increase in drug tests positive for marijuana since 2013.
- 93% increase in packages of marijuana intercepted leaving Colorado since 2010.
- New study revealing that casual marijuana use creates physical abnormalities in the adolescent brain.
- A significant rise in children accidentally ingesting marijuana-infused foods.
- Companies that hope to profit off of marijuana e-cigarettes.

“We now know that the company selling Camel and Winston cigarettes outside the U.S. – the third largest tobacco conglomerate in the world – has invested in technology used to vaporize marijuana in an e-cigarette,” commented SAM’s Executive Director, Kevin A. Sabet. “We are beginning to see Big Tobacco get into the marijuana game, and it’s important for Administration officials to understand what is going on.” A recent Bloomberg Businessweek article reported that the founder of the e-cigarette company is “not ruling out marketing his device for weed in the future.”

The SAM 4/20 Report Card includes data collected since Colorado’s de facto legalization started in 2009 and full legalization was implemented in 2014. The report highlights how Colorado has not collected on its original projection of $134 million in revenue. In January, the state collected a mere $2 million in revenue from legal marijuana sales, and $3.2 million in February.

The report can be found at www.learnaboutsam.org.

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**About Project SAM**

Project SAM is a nonpartisan alliance of lawmakers, scientists and other concerned citizens who want to move beyond simplistic discussions of "incarceration versus legalization" when discussing marijuana use, and instead focus on practical changes in marijuana policy that neither demonizes users nor legalizes the drug. SAM supports a treatment, health-first marijuana policy.