

PRESS RELEASE

Colorado Department of Law
Attorney General John W. Suthers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 19, 2009

CONTACT

Mike Saccone, Communications Director
303-866-5632

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RELEASES STATEMENT CONCERNING
THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S NEW MEDICAL MARIJUANA POLICY**

DENVER — Colorado Attorney General John Suthers released the following statement on the U.S. Justice Department's new policy on the investigation and prosecution of medical marijuana operations:

“Colorado has seen a rapid proliferation of medical marijuana dispensaries and patients since the Justice Department earlier this year announced it would not actively prosecute medical marijuana businesses — despite the fact that marijuana remains an illegal drug under federal law. The U.S. Attorney General's new medical marijuana policy, released today, while a clearer statement on the Justice Department's policy, relies on the faulty assumption that Colorado has clearly defined laws on medical marijuana. In fact, it does not.

“Amendment 20, written by marijuana-legalization proponents, is very vague and contains no meaningful regulatory scheme. Dispensaries and grow operations, for example, are not mentioned in either Colorado's Constitution or its statutes. This vacuum has given rise to problems I and other law enforcement leaders have highlighted over the past few months. This legal vacuum also has left Colorado's towns and cities to grapple with the state's burgeoning marijuana trade.

“For the U.S. Attorney General's new policy to have any significance for Colorado, our state lawmakers must give clarification to Amendment 20 and create a regulatory scheme for the growing medical marijuana industry.”