



# Senate Confirms Marijuana Opponent Jeff Sessions for U.S. Attorney General

Reactions from the cannabis community are mixed.

By Mike Adams

**T**he Republican-dominated Senate confirmed the controversial Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions on Wednesday night to take the reins as the next Attorney General of the United States. This action makes Sessions the new law enforcement hammer over at the U.S. Department of Justice, which includes the Drug Enforcement Administration.

It was no surprise that Sessions, who was confirmed in a vote of 52-to-47, was given the job. Despite his less than favorable track record on a number of sensitive issues, including drug reform, the senator entered into his confirmation proceedings with more support than any other appointee for the Trump Cabinet.

But the Democrats were simply not having it. They fought tooth and nail to prevent Sessions from securing the confirmation, spending over 50 hours straight on the Senate floor throwing

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up a plethora of objections over the appointment of a suspected bigot. By Tuesday night, the protest ran so deep that Majority Leader Mitch McConnell opted to pull the plug, silencing Senator Elizabeth Warren after she essentially called Senator Sessions a racist for his comments against the African American community. It was clear -- at that point -- the Republicans would not stop at nothing to ensure victory.

On Wednesday evening, the vote that would end the confirmation battle was mostly along party lines. The only favorable ballot to come from the Democrats happened at the hand of Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia.

Of course, Sessions counted himself “present” for the affair.

As soon as Sessions is sworn in, he will take the lead at the Justice Department.

Ever since President Donald Trump nominated Sessions for the Attorney General position, the marijuana industry has been in a state of panic over concerns that the dream of legal weed could come to an abrupt end. That’s because Sessions, who once said, “good people don’t smoke marijuana,” was critical of the Obama Administration for its hands off approach to legal marijuana states – giving the indication that he would not take a similar stance.

In fact, during his confirmation

hearing, Sessions, while ambiguous in his language, went as far as to suggest that he would enforce the laws dictated by the federal government. When members of the Senate Judiciary Committee questioned him about whether he would expend federal resources to impose a crackdown on legal marijuana he said, “I will not commit to never enforcing Federal law.”

Sessions later went on to say that if Congress has concerns about what he plans to do with respect to the cannabis industry, they should change the law.

“I think one obvious concern is that the United States Congress made the possession of marijuana in every state and distribution of it an illegal act,” Sessions said during his confirmation hearing. “So if we need to...if that’s something [that] is not desired any longer, Congress should pass a law to change the rule.”

But until this happens, Sessions believes “we should do our job and enforce laws effectively as we are able.”

The cannabis industry has mixed feelings about Sessions becoming the next U.S. Attorney General. Some folks are not at all worried.

“I fully expect Sessions to do the job he has accepted,” Tony Alfieri, president of Colorado cannabis extract company

Quigley’s, told MERRY JANE. “The very idea that the AG of the United States of America would allow himself or be allowed to trample on the rules that govern our nation is laughable.”

“Once this media hysteria dies down and the man is allowed to do his job we will see the cannabis industry is here to stay,” he added.

Others remain skeptical.

“Jeff Sessions seems to be part of the minority of the United States who is still stuck in outdated thinking about drugs and cannabis in particular,” Max Simon, CEO and Founder of Green Flower Media, told MERRY JANE. “If Sessions tries to roll back the progress we’ve made as a movement, we will fight to make sure they hear our majority voices loud and clear.”

“Credible education about cannabis is more important than ever. Misunderstanding this plant is what caused the war on drugs,” he added.

National marijuana advocacy groups, some of which are responsible for legalization in a number of states, say they are cautiously optimistic about the fate of the cannabis trade.

“President Trump has consistently said that states should be able to determine their own marijuana laws, and his spokesperson made it clear that the attorney general will be implementing the Trump



agenda,” Robert Capecchi, Director of Federal Policies with the Marijuana Policy Project, said in a statement. “We are hopeful that Mr. Sessions will follow the president’s lead and respect states’ rights on marijuana policy.”

So, what’s next?

Attorney General Jeff Sessions will likely take over in his new position at the Justice Department within the month. Some reports indicate that if Sessions does decide to put an end to the cultivation and sale of marijuana in legal states, the Department of Justice would first issue a memo giving those jurisdictions 90 days to suspend operations. Once the deadline is reached, drug agents would then be given the green light to bust up the industry by force.

There is speculation that Congress may finally get serious about passing nationwide marijuana reform measures this year in an attempt to prevent the Trump Administration or any administration that comes after from ever threatening the cannabis industry again. ■