



U.S. Hemp Roundtable

Contact: Kerry Hinkle

U.S. Hemp Roundtable
(765) 278-8069

kerry@hempsupporter.com
news@hempsupporter.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25th, 2024

EAST WASHINGTON FARMERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES JOIN UNITED NATIONAL HEMP INDUSTRY CALLING ON CHAIR MCMORRIS RODGERS TO HOLD LONG-PROMISED HEARING ON FDA REGULATION

SPOKANE, WA. — In a significant move to address the challenges faced by the U.S. hemp industry, East Washington farmers and small businesses joined 28 non-profit organizations – representing every element of the hemp food chain and every region of the nation – as well as four leading national dietary supplement organizations – urging House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers to hold a hearing in her committee on FDA regulation. A [coalition letter](#) urges McMorris Rodgers' committee to expedite a hearing on the FDA's regulation, or lack thereof, of the rapidly growing hemp market, including products such as CBD.

Despite the legalization of hemp through the 2018 Farm Bill over five years ago, the FDA has taken no meaningful steps toward regulating hemp products, causing significant challenges for the industry. The repercussions of FDA inaction extend beyond consumer confusion. U.S. farmers, a crucial part of the hemp industry, have suffered economically with commodity prices dropping by more than 90 percent.

Chair McMorris Rodgers met with constituent farmers and small businesses in 2022 and expressed support for the idea of her committee holding a hearing on hemp and CBD. At the time, she was the only Ranking Member of the committee. Since acquiring the chair's gavel, the committee asked stakeholders to suggest new regulatory requirements through a July 2023 Request for Information. Hundreds of responses were made, but House Energy & Commerce has yet to hold a hearing. The coalition letter emphasizes the need for a hearing to shed light on the recommendations from the RFI, allowing her and other committee members to weigh in on crucial issues affecting the hemp industry within her district.

"It's increasingly difficult for small family farmers to hold on to our farms. We cherish our lifestyle and our family legacy, but it's tough to make a dollar out here. I have worked with representative McMorris on several issues over the years, and I am hopeful that she will support hemp farmers by working to get a hearing before the House Energy and Commerce committee on the critical topic of FDA oversight of the hemp industry." **said Scott Wheat, Wheat Family Farms, Ford, Washington.**

“When we met with Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers in June of 2022, she led us to believe that she supported a hearing on hemp. For a small CBD shop owner, regulatory clarity at the federal level is a crucial lifeline. We need clear guidelines that not only ensure legal adherence, but also pave the way for sustainable growth and increased consumer confidence. Yet over a year and a half after we met with Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers, nothing has happened.” **said Leah Moen, Owner Source Code Essentials, Spokane, Washington.**

“We need the FDA to regulate hemp ingredients soundly and reasonably. Until we have regulations, the quality of available hemp products will be inconsistent and conscientious hemp businesspeople will continue to be at the mercy of a patchwork of disparate regulations across all of the 50 states. Washington state hemp law is primed to click into place with improved FDA guidance. Our request is simple: Madam Chair McMorris Rodgers, please hold a hearing with the FDA and urge them to regulate us.” **said Dylan Summers, President, Association of Western Hemp Professionals.**

“Washington State is the 2nd biggest and most diverse agricultural state in the nation but our hemp farmers, rural communities and businesses are really struggling especially in East Washington because of the lack of regulatory oversight. Congresswoman McMorrisRodgers has the power to help us change that. Her constituents are calling on her to act now.”, **said Bonny Jo Peterson, Executive Director, Industrial Hemp Association of Washington**

“It is no small task to unite today’s hemp industry around a shared goal. But this letter, and the accompanying 28 organizations, have all agreed we need FDA action to regulate hemp products, and we need it now,” said **Jonathan Miller, General Counsel, U.S. Hemp Roundtable.** “The fate of the entire industry – hemp extracts, fiber, seed, etc. – depend on regulatory oversight, and we urge House Energy & Commerce to take swift action to address these issues through a hearing in the near future.”

###

ABOUT

The U.S. Hemp Roundtable is the hemp industry’s national advocacy organization, a coalition of dozens of leading companies and organizations committed to safe hemp and CBD products. The Roundtable proudly works in partnership with the industry’s leading national, regional and state grassroots organizations, and is leading the way forward for hemp and CBD products through education and action. More at hempsupporter.com.