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PRESS RELEASE

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California's Police Chiefs Applaud Governor Brown's Signature of Historic Medical Marijuana Legislation

Law Protects Public Safety, Local Control, and Patient Safety

Sacramento- Almost 20 years after voters enacted Proposition 215 giving patients access to medical marijuana, California finally has a strong regulatory framework that advances public safety and protects local control and patient safety. The Governor's signature today on the three bills that comprise the Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act is historic and culminates an effort led by a broad coalition that includes the California Police Chiefs, the League of California Cities, labor groups, patient access advocates and portions of the cannabis industry. The bills are AB 243 (Wood), AB 266 (Bonta, Cooley, Jones-Sawyer, Lackey, Wood) and SB 643 (McGuire).

The Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act establishes a balance between California communities' ability to preserve influence over medical marijuana distribution within their borders and the right of California's citizens to access medical marijuana as provided for in Proposition 215. The final product reflects thousands of hours dedicated by the administration, the authors, legislative staff and stakeholders.

"This package proves that, for the first time, Californians can work collaboratively to develop and produce comprehensive medical marijuana regulation," said California Police Chiefs Association President Chief David Bejarano. "This piece of legislation is an example of bipartisan collaboration, compromise and growth. I am thrilled that this measure received the support of Governor Brown. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of this significant piece of legislation."

“Law enforcement will now have clear rules for overseeing medical marijuana activities in their community – something badly lacking for the past 20 years,” said Assemblyman Tom Lackey (R-Palmdale) a former CHP officer and joint author of AB 266. “California is taking the first-step towards a statewide approach on marijuana-impaired drivers by commissioning a UCSD study on how marijuana affects driving. Armed with this research, we can develop best practices for getting high drivers off the road so we can avoid Colorado’s mistakes where a recent report cited 1 in 5 of all traffic safety deaths were marijuana-related in 2014.”

The Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act is significant for California law enforcement because it:

- Requires the development of a study that identifies the impact and impairing effect that marijuana has on motor skills
- Establishes a unique identifier and track and trace program to be administered by the Department of Food and Agriculture. The program will track and report the movement of medical marijuana items throughout the distribution chain while utilizing a unique identifier number
- Establishes uniform safety standards and security requirements at dispensaries as well as for transport of the product
- Limits vertical integration by requiring third party transportation, distribution and testing
- Provides that state licenses may be denied for any past criminal conviction that is substantially related to the operation of a medical marijuana enterprise.

The California Police Chiefs Association represents the state’s municipal police chiefs whose agencies protect over 26 million Californians.

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