



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-00798**

BY: **Ms. MAY (SAANICH-GULF ISLANDS)**

DATE: **OCTOBER 24, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE JANE PHILPOTT**

Response by the Minister of Health

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

CANNABIS

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is committed to legalizing, strictly regulating and restricting access to cannabis to keep it out of the hands of children and to keep profits of the illicit trade out of the hands of criminals. This is a complex policy issue, with important public health and safety considerations. A thoughtfully planned, strictly regulated, and carefully implemented regime is critical to mitigate the risks of harm to Canadians.

On June 30, 2016, the Government of Canada launched the Task Force on Marijuana Legalization and Regulation to consider key aspects of the commitment to legalize cannabis, and to report to the Government with its advice on the design of a new system that legalizes, strictly regulates, and restricts access to marijuana. The work of the Task Force is guided by a discussion paper available to the public (<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/health-system-systeme-sante/consultations/legalization-marijuana-legalisation/document-eng.php>). This paper explores several questions about cannabis legalization and regulation, including about the consumption of cannabis through methods other than smoking and the implications of criminal records resulting from current cannabis prohibitions.

This summer, the Task Force, led by the Honourable Anne McLellan, met with experts in public health, law enforcement, economics and industry, among others; provincial, territorial and municipal officials; representatives from Indigenous governments and organizations; and young Canadians. They received approximately 30,000 responses from individuals and organizations through a public consultation between June 30 and August 29. They also visited several licensed

producers of marijuana for medical purposes in Canada and travelled to Colorado and Washington State, where marijuana has been legalized, to learn from officials, legal experts and industry representatives about their experiences.

On November 30, 2016, the Task Force announced that it has completed its work and that their report is being translated. It will be provided to Ministers and the public in December once it is available in both official languages.

The Government is looking forward to receiving the Task Force's report, which will inform efforts to introduce effective, evidence-informed legislation for consideration by Parliament in the spring of 2017.