

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Attorney General Racine and the Coalition for Responsible Cannabis Production Announce Synthetic Drug Partnership

Effort Includes Education and Resources to Explore More Effective Means of Prosecution

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has established a partnership with the Coalition for Responsible Cannabis Production (“the Coalition”) to combat the rising use of synthetic drugs in the District and the related fallout for public health and public safety. The initiative aims to educate the public and businesses about the dangers and misinformation around synthetic drugs, and to further develop criminal and civil remedies to ameliorate the increased use of these substances.

“The use of these synthetic drugs has become a national problem in need of a national response by a coalition of concerned agencies, organizations and states,” Attorney General Racine said. **“The manufacturers, distributors and sellers of these harmful synthetic drugs say the substances being peddled are a safe and legal alternative to marijuana. Synthetic drugs are neither safe nor legal, and often include mysterious chemical compounds that present a range of potentially devastating side effects to users, from severe mental impairment and seizures to violent impulses and death.”**

The Attorney General continued: **“OAG looks forward to partnering with the Coalition to develop creative strategies that will reduce the accessibility and use of illegal synthetic drugs.”**

The Coalition is a Denver-based industry group whose mission is to develop industry production standards and protocols. They have pledged to support the partnership by investing in educational materials and retaining outside counsel to develop legal strategies to combat the illegal synthetic drug business. In this regard, the Coalition has retained the Davillier Law Group LLC, a highly respected law firm based in New Orleans.

According to Fred Niehaus, spokesperson for the Coalition, “A major goal of the Coalition is to educate the public about the fraud of synthetic drugs being anything like marijuana. Responsible users of legal cannabis need to know that synthetic drugs are not safe. We stand with Attorney General Racine on this initiative because the Coalition, made up of responsible producers of legal cannabis, want to support responsible cannabis production standards and protocols in order to eliminate unscrupulous and illegal drug dealers.”

Additionally, the Coalition pledges to support Attorney General Racine and law enforcement in devising means to crack down on the distribution channels for these drugs.

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