



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Advocacy Leaders launch #SAFE4Equity Campaign to Educate, Support Passage of the SAFE Banking Act

Washington, D.C. – Advocacy organizations Marijuana Matters, Minority Cannabis Business Association (MCBA), Minorities for Medical Marijuana (M4MM), and Women Grow to launch #SAFE4Equity, a campaign to inform cannabis operators, industry stakeholders, congressional leaders and the general public about the crucial need for the Secure and Fair Enforcement Act (SAFE Banking Act). SAFE Banking is included in the House-passed version of the America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength Act of 2022 (COMPETES Act). #SAFE4Equity supports the inclusion of the SAFE Act in the final package currently being negotiated by the Senate to provide relief for small minority-owned cannabis businesses.

The campaign kicks off on June 2, 2022 with the re-launch of safe4equity.org website and the SAFE4Equity social media channels that will provide timely information relating to the SAFE Act, updates on its movement through the Senate, as well as testimonials from minority cannabis entrepreneurs currently impaired by the limited access to banking services.

The campaign's mission is to bring light to the fact that equitable access to capital and banking services is critical on the path to social and economic justice through cannabis reform. Without it, small, minority- and women-owned cannabis businesses fail to have the resources necessary to operate safely and effectively compete at a higher scale to run their enterprises. The SAFE Act is the necessary piece of legislation that will begin to alleviate the burdens many of these smaller operators face and offer a solution to support their business growth.

SAFE Banking Act lead sponsor, Congressman Ed Perlmutter, has been a staunch advocate for equitable cannabis banking and has worked to pass the bill in the U.S. House of Representatives six times while continuing to garner bipartisan support. Perlmutter joins #SAFE4Equity in the call for the Senate to pass the SAFE Banking Act this year either through the America COMPETES conference committee negotiations or as a standalone bill.

“I appreciate SAFE4Equity’s support of the SAFE Banking Act and their ongoing advocacy for federal cannabis reform. SAFE Banking is only one piece of the puzzle but it is a critical piece of reform that underserved communities and small businesses need now,” said Perlmutter. “It is imperative that the conference committee solve this problem as soon as possible to begin to alleviate the threat of public safety and inequity which threatens communities and emerging small businesses across the country.”

In addition to providing critical information on the SAFE Banking Act, the #SAFE4Equity campaign will be used as a vehicle to address one of the core barriers to entry for minority cannabis operators—funding. The campaign will feature real-time stories from cannabis entrepreneurs navigating predatory agreements and financial lending practices that are a result of the regulatory banking barriers.

“Passing the SAFE Banking Act would help address this core issue affecting countless small and minority owned cannabis operators throughout the country,” said Amber Littlejohn, Executive Director of MCBA. “By extending a safe harbor to banks, credit unions, certain payment processors, and other select financial entities to offer essential services such as loans, deposit accounts, check cashing, and electronic payments to state lawful cannabis companies, we are creating a sustainable future for small cannabis businesses and stopping the unjust criminalization of cannabis.”

“Advocates have been fighting for years for sensible cannabis reform. The opportunity to pass legislation around safe and equal banking for all in the regulated cannabis industry would be a huge step in the right direction,” said Roz McCarthy, Chief Executive Officer of Minorities for Medical Marijuana.

“As states continue to legalize, our small, women- and minority-owned entrepreneurs’ banking challenges become greater” said Gia Morón, President of Women Grow. “We want to see an industry where these entrepreneurs can thrive, but in order for them to do so they must have banking resources. SAFE Banking will provide the necessary access and secure banking services our business owners need to operate sound businesses.”

“SAFE Banking will not repair all of the harms from the war on drugs”, said Courtney Davis, Executive Director of Marijuana Matters, “but it is one of the many tools that are essential to supporting individuals from historically disadvantaged communities in becoming successful entrepreneurs in the burgeoning cannabis space. Our cannabis laws are in desperate need of reform and we have an opportunity in Congress to pass a bill that will provide safe access to banking for minority and women entrepreneurs.

For more information on #SAFE4Equity or to get involved, please visit <https://safe4equity.org/> and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#).

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Marijuana Matters

Marijuana Matters is a social enterprise working at the nexus of community, industry and government. Our mission is to create pathways out of poverty for those most harmed by the war on drugs through advocacy, education and entrepreneurship. Please visit our [website](#) to learn more about our mission and support our work.

Minority Cannabis Business Association

Founded in 2015, the Minority Cannabis Business Association (MCBA) is the largest national trade association dedicated to serving the needs of minority cannabis businesses and our communities. MCBA represents more than 300 minority and allied cannabis businesses and industry and community leaders who share a vision for an equitable, just, and responsible cannabis industry. Our mission is carried out by a 15-member Board of Directors composed of a diverse group of industry veterans, medical and legal professionals, advocates and community leaders. Learn more by visiting our [website](#)

Minorities for Medical Marijuana (M4MM)

Minorities for Medical Marijuana is a National 501c3 nonprofit organization located in Orlando, Florida. M4MM is focused on providing outreach, training, education, and resources to communities of color. Project Clean Slate is our Social justice program focused on providing free no charge expungement clinic opportunities for minority communities. Specifically, they believe the new legalized cannabis industry gives us an opportunity to repair the harm communities of color suffered during the “war on drugs era.” Erasing individuals marijuana arrests and convictions is our #1 priority. In addition, all participants who go through their expungement clinic will receive complimentary wrap-around services for 6 months afterwards to help navigate through social service supportive services offered in their respective town.

Women Grow

Women Grow connects, educates, inspires, and empowers the next generation of industry leaders. In addition, Women Grow creates programs, a community, and events for aspiring and current women in business. Founded in 2014 in Denver, CO, Women Grow serves as a catalyst for women to succeed in an emerging industry. Follow Women Grow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#) @womengrow. www.womengrow.com

