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Donald Trump   State of the Union   Marijuana

## Why President Trump didn't discuss cannabis during the State of the Union



By [Natalie Fertig](#)

Updated February 06, 2019 06:06 PM EST

*Editor's note: The story has been updated with reactions to President Trump's State of the Union address.*

February 05, 2019 06:17 PM EST

WASHINGTON (CIRCA) — When President Donald Trump mentioned the "drugs that cross our border and flood into our cities" during his second State of the Union address Tuesday night, he did not mention marijuana.

"Meth, heroin, concaine, and fentanyl,' President Trump said.

But not marijuana.

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In recent speeches, including one Trump delivered in January during the government shutdown, Strekal says Trump has conspicuously left marijuana out of the laundry list of drugs allegedly being funneled across the southern border.

"In the past, when lawmakers would make the case for the absurd policy of a border wall ... they would include marijuana in their laundry list of drug complaints, and the president chose not to do so," Strekal said.

**Elam**

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Anybody else notice within the first five minutes of the State of the Union, President Trump's used the words "War on Drugs" emphasis on Meth, Cocaine, Heroin and Fentanyl at the border 😊. Marijuana Legalization is coming around and I believe Trump will flip the switch!

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All of the President's rhetoric about the drug war, Strekal says, sends signals to U.S. attorneys general and other officials around the country looking to take cues on how to approach the cannabis industry – which remains illegal from a federal perspective.

"How much of his speech does he focus on the war on drugs broadly?" Strekal explained. "Because it does reinforce those who hold prohibitionist views, to entrench those views, whether or not he says the word marijuana."

Turns out, the President spoke about illegal drugs only once during the State of the Union. He used the word "drugs" 5 times. Three of those uses were in the context of prescription drugs, one was about illegal drug trafficking, and the last was about Matthew Charles – the first person to be released from prison under the First Step Act.

The President's exclusion of cannabis from the State of the Union, though, was not unexpected.

Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska is a co-chair of the "cannabis caucus" in the House of Representatives. The caucus is a group of lawmakers – many from states where recreational marijuana is legal – who focus on promoting and passing cannabis-related legislation. The Alaska congressman also did not expect the president to discuss cannabis at his yearly address, but said if he did, it would have been an important step.

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the Union. "If the President is looking for a way to encourage bipartisan reforms tonight, broaching the topic would be an excellent start."

## What's your stoner personality?

Who do you become when you smoke?

**Let's get started!**

President Trump has long held the position that states have the right to make decisions themselves on legalizing or regulating cannabis — despite it continuing to be federally illegal. He reportedly supported an amendment introduced by Sen. Cory Gardner, R-Colo., to the [First Step Act](#) in December to federally legalize marijuana and officially hand the ability to legalize and regulate over to the states.

But in terms of setting the tone for legislation that will the daily lives of those within the cannabis industry, cannabis users, or those who wish their state or locality would legalize, the State of the Union may not be the place to start.

"Interested Americans would be better served attending a city council meeting," said Strekal.