

AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION

Resolution AGR-16-32

RESOLUTION ON RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS, POTENTIAL, AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FARMERS SPECIFICALLY FOR THE CULTIVATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LEGALIZED CANNABIS SATIVA L

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) believes it is imperative that states recognize and access the value of partnership between its farmers, specifically African American farmers who are transitioning to more diverse crops and entrepreneurial operations;

WHEREAS, there is growing concern in the African American farming community over the increased consolidation in agriculture;

WHEREAS, cannabis sativa L. has been legalized in 23 states and the District of Columbia for medical use and four states- Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Alaska and DC for recreational use;

WHEREAS, in many states the cannabis sativa L. proposed acquisitions has far-reaching anticompetitive consequences for the agricultural economy, and, if permitted African American farmers could be significantly diminished by competition in the market and may result in substantial harm to African American farmers;

WHEREAS, there are 44, 629 African American farmers in the United States and 86 percent of farmers with a black principal operator had fewer of 180 acres in 2012 and 79 percent had sales less than \$10,000;

WHEREAS, the NBCSL encourages states to preserve agricultural competition by not enforcing discriminatory practices that would create a monopoly in American cannabis sativa L. growers' industry, resulting in fewer choices, innovation and higher prices for African American farmers to qualify for licensing to grow and distribute cannabis sativa L.; and

WHEREAS, incorporating flexibility in the implementation of acquisitions to cultivate and distribute cannabis sativa L. will encourage relevant state agencies and offices to develop long-term strategies that acknowledge and address the special needs of small farmers in general, and African American farmers specifically and demand-side resources, and orderly decision making;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that guidelines regulating cannabis sativa L. commercial growing should be flexible enough to develop and implement programs and policies that assist African

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American farmers with gaining access to licensing, funds, technical resources to aid in their farming operations for the cultivation and distribution of cannabis sativa L. in each legalized state;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL, encourage and recognize the importance of joint ventures between African American farmers and farmers in the agricultural industry to develop plans and work together to reflect the policy's needs, economic conditions of each state and region, and implement a campaign to ensure and encourage participation of African American farmers operators; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) makes copies of this resolution available for distribution to the President of the United States, all members of Congress, and all states' legislative leadership.

SPONSOR: Representative Alan Williams (FL)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Agriculture and Conservation Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Co-Chairs: Representative Helen Miller (IA) and Representative John Rogers (AL)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 4, 2015

Ratification is certified by: Senator Catherine Pugh (MD), President