

## **Activist Asks Governor if Any Cannabis Legalization Bill Will get Royal Assent from Government House**

In open letter sent to Bermuda Governor George Ferguson and published on various social media web pages, Alan Gordon asks if Government House will grant or deny assent to any future legislation purporting to legalize even small amounts of cannabis.

Gordon says the UN Treaty prohibits UN member states like the UK from allowing cannabis to go un-banned, unless for medical or scientific purposes. While the Treaty provides ample loopholes used by UN Member States like, like Uruguay, Portugal and Holland, Gordon wants to know the UK's position, and whether legislation is the correct route, or whether the UK will force us to undertake any cannabis allowance via Ministerial discretion wither in the current form, or expanded by Parliament.

"Bermuda is not a member state of the UN, and cannot make representations to that body", says Gordon, who adds that by convention the UK speaks for Bermuda to the UN and other international bodies.

I have asked His Excellency the Governor to alert us ahead of time what path the UK will opt to take in the matter, so that Bermuda can choose the most effective path going forward. Gordon notes that while the Governor may block legislation by refusing Royal assent, that he has no power to challenge Ministerial discretion, so that Treaty-compliant expansions of Ministerial discretion, utilizing Treaty loopholes which the UK may not wish to exploit on its own, may be the only way forward.

(Copy of Gordon's Open Letter to the Governor is attached below)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Alan Gordon

293-2538

732-2526

**23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014**

alangordon@logic.bm

Excellency Bermuda Governor George Ferguson  
Government House  
11 Langton Hill  
Pembroke HM13  
Bermuda

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014

Your Excellency:

In the likelihood of future legislation in Bermuda purporting to allow general cannabis use by adults, I seek your Office's position on whether assent is likely to be given such a bill, in light of the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, which seems to require the United Kingdom and its territories to take all steps as are necessary to prevent cannabis cultivation, sale and use.

While I am sure that the UK, if it were so minded, could utilise one or more of the Treaty's loopholes and/or exemptions in order to allow Bermuda to regulate the cannabis trade (or simply point out the futility and hypocrisy of the Treaty's application, in the manner of Uruguay), it is my suspicion that the UK will opt not to, and will instead deny assent to any bill purporting to legalize cannabis for general use.

It is my understanding that even should assent from your Office not be forthcoming, there are still mechanisms in law which would allow Bermuda to go her own way on this issue without requiring Gubernatorial assent to a bill

Would you be willing to clarify the UK's position on the matter of assent to a legalization bill of small amounts of cannabis which will not leave the Bermuda's borders?

Grateful Regards,

Alan L. Gordon