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DEA Under Fire For Blocking Psilocybin As Treatment For Terminally Ill Cancer Patients

by Fermin Orgambide, Benzinga Staff Writer
April 14, 2022 2:38 PM | 2 min read



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The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will face activists at its headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. **Protestors are intending to block entrance to the building to call attention to the rights of terminally ill cancer patients to try psilocybin as a palliative.**

The goal of the mobilization is to protest the DEA's prohibition of psilocybin for the treatment of cancer in terminally ill patients, **although the substance is guaranteed by the "Right to Try" Act as experimental medicine.** According to the [website calling out DEA's actions](#), the protest is expected to be on **May 9, 2022.**

David Bronner, CEO (cosmic engagement officer) of **Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps** and member of the board of **Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies**, is leading the protest. "Desperately ill end-stage cancer patients have been blocked by the DEA from accessing effective psilocybin therapy, and on May 9th we plan to return the favor and block the DEA entrances with a peaceful sit-in," said Bronner.

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Since psilocybin has already completed an FDA-approved Phase 1 clinical trial, it is considered an eligible medicine under the "Right to Try" Act, which was signed by former president Trump. **Although there is ample proof that psilocybin could be used to treat depression and help with end-of-life distress, patients were blocked by the DEA from receiving the substance as a form of relief.**

Sen. Patty Murray (D), chair of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, is now overseeing DEA's case. "After hearing from these patients, my office asked the DEA directly about the issues they are raising—and I am going to keep pushing the DEA and Biden Administration for answers," Murray said in an [interview](#).

"These terminally ill patients do not have the luxury of time," added **Kathryn Tucker**, an attorney for a doctor who requested psilocybin for two cancer patients. "Justice delayed for these patients is justice denied. The clock is ticking."

The DEA Against The Law

Inside the movement for the legalization of cannabis and psychedelics, there is growing discontent with the DEA's actions, although it could be argued that the discontent was always there.

Though lately, the DEA is facing an increasing number of lawsuits. For example, [two Rhode Island research labs is suing the DEA for "foot-dragging" on marijuana pharmaceutical licensing](#). Their argument is that nearly three years have passed since the companies submitted the initial applications for the clinical trials of some of their products.

There was also a petition to [reschedule cannabis in all of its forms under the Controlled Substances Act](#). In the same vein, the DEA proposed to [criminalize 5 different tryptamines](#), but this proposal **would primarily affect American scientists investigating the compounds** since they already are illegal for recreational consumption under the Federal Analogue Act.

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