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For Immediate Release

Public health and safety organizations engage workgroup to develop regulatory framework for cannabis in the U.S.

June 28, 2022 – The Association of Food and Drug Officials ([AFDO](#)) and Foundation of Cannabis United Standards ([FOCUS](#)) have officially launched efforts to develop a Federal Regulatory Framework, or FRF, for cannabis in the U.S.

“Federal involvement and regulatory oversight of the U.S. cannabis industry is imperative to the health and safety of all Americans,” says Steve Mandernach, AFDO Executive Director. “While multiple legislative attempts have been unable to result in a path forward for federal regulation, the experience and expertise of all stakeholders should provide the basis for consensus on efficient regulation. Focusing on the cultivation, manufacturing and safety of end use cannabis product including accurate testing and its effect when used or consumed can provide better structural health and safety protections for all consumers.”

Additionally, recommendations would outline health and safety regulations for cannabis workers.

The lack of clarity at the federal level not only threatens public health and safety, but also risks the potential future of the U.S. as the major player in the global cannabis economy according to Lezli Engelking, Founder of FOCUS. She notes the rest of the world is quickly developing national cannabis frameworks, creating the potential for massive supply and downstream demand issues that will greatly influence American cannabis stakeholders for decades to come. Engelking and Mandernach agree it is critical that this roadmap positions the U.S. cannabis industry to remain global leaders.

“Americans have a basic expectation that the federal government is regulating health and safety for employees and product safety for consumers,” says Engelking. “With the cannabis industry continuing to grow at record rates for over a decade, the time to correct this federal omission is now. FOCUS is honored to be leading this public health and safety effort in partnership with AFDO. We look forward to creating some significant positive change in the cannabis industry at the federal level.”

In early May, AFDO and FOCUS brought together a group of 20 experts from a variety of stakeholder groups to form the official Federal Regulatory Framework workgroup for cannabis. During the two-day strategy session, workgroup members began work on a charter that will guide framework development. Participants were asked to come with an open mind, thinking beyond the problems of today, to determine the best possible future regulatory structure. The FRF workgroup will focus on regulation, not legalization. Many states have legalized cannabis in a variety of forms. This effort will focus on regulation of the industry resulting in the protection of public health.

The Federal Regulatory Framework charter was introduced to the regulatory community at AFDO's 126th Annual Educational Conference earlier in June to inform and engage broad participation in these efforts. Mandernach says the framework will have a long-term effect on cannabis stakeholders across the country, as well as the evolution of the federal regulation that will guide the standardization of cannabis health and safety measures.

Input from all stakeholder groups is critical to the success of these efforts. Multiple opportunities to participate, advise and comment over the coming months will be provided. To sign up for updates or become involved in this work, interested parties should sign up through AFDO's Cannabis Committee at www.afdo.org/committees.

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About AFDO

Since 1896, AFDO unites high-level regulatory officials, industry representatives, trade associations, academia, and consumer organizations. AFDO members strive to foster uniformity in the adoption and enforcement of science-based food, medical device and cosmetic products safety laws and regulation for improved public health. afdo.org

About FOCUS

Established in 2014 as The Cannabis Health and Safety Organization, FOCUS is a 501c3 non-profit organization that addresses the many shortcomings in quality, safety, and consistency that became evident with the explosive growth of the global cannabis industry. FOCUS is not a cannabis company, an industry trade association, nor is FOCUS an advocacy organization. FOCUS is an unbiased, third-party with no financial stake in – or funding from – the cannabis industry that exists to help assure the rapidly growing global cannabis industry has the necessary protections in place for the health, safety, success, and welfare of everyone. Our autonomy fosters a principled, objective organization that protects end users, and acts as the much-needed neutral, nonpartisan bridge between industry and regulatory. focusstandards.org