

JAMES M. JEFFORDS
VERMONT

TOLL FREE TDD/TTY: 1-800-835-5500
vermont@jeffords.senate.gov
http://www.senate.gov/~jeffords

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4503

October 10, 2006

COMMITTEES:
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
RANKING MEMBER

FINANCE
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND
PENSIONS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

I write to you today to follow-up on your answer to a question I asked during your confirmation process.

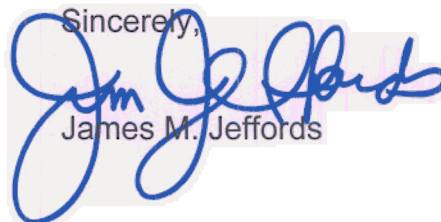
The issue I raised at the time concerned a petition to reschedule marijuana that had been forwarded to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). The DHHS was to provide the DEA a scientific and medical evaluation of marijuana upon which the DEA would base its decision on whether to reschedule the drug. As I stated in my question, the law requires the Secretary to conduct this evaluation "within a reasonable time."

The rescheduling petition was forwarded by the DEA in August 2004 and when asked in January 2005, you stated that you "would make every effort to complete the evaluation by August 2005." Needless to say August 2005 has long since passed and it has now been over two years since the DEA forwarded the rescheduling petition to the DHHS for evaluation, and yet no action has been taken on the DEA's request.

- Please describe the factors that have led to this delay in responding to the DEA's request.
- Do you have a new estimate of when action might be completed on the DEA's request for scientific and medical evaluation?

In advance, let me thank you for your prompt attention to these questions, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



James M. Jeffords

JMJ: edb

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4503
(202) 224-5141

BURLINGTON OFFICE:
30 Main Street
Suite 350
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 658-6001

MONTPELIER OFFICE:
453 Stone Cutters Way
Suite 1
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 223-5273

RUTLAND OFFICE:
Lindholm Building, 2nd Floor
2 South Main Street
Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 773-3875