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EXPANDED ACCESS TO MARIJUANA FOR RESEARCHERS MAY CREATE INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES



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President Joe Biden will soon consider [HR 8454 - The Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act](#)—a bill expanding medical researchers’ access to marijuana to facilitate studies aimed at determining marijuana’s, and its synthetic chemical equivalents’, effectiveness in treating both adults and developing adolescents for serious medical conditions, and requiring federal agencies to report to Congress within one year their research findings regarding marijuana’s potential for various therapies and its impacts on cognitive abilities and one’s operation of motor vehicles and heavy equipment.

To facilitate the medical research, the Attorney General must report to Congress if there is an inadequate or uninterrupted supply of marijuana for research purposes and what steps the Attorney General will take to restore the uninterrupted and adequate supply.

Researchers and manufacturers would have to obtain registration with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). For marijuana manufacturer applicants, the Attorney General would be required to approve applications for registration as a medical marijuana manufacturer within 60 days of receipt of a completed application and any denials must contain a written explanation of the reason for denial. Manufacturer registration for those operating in Florida would seemingly only be available to current Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (MMTC) licensees because the manufacturer-applicant must be properly registered with each state in which it operates.

Finally, if a drug containing marijuana or CBD is ultimately approved for commercial production, the manufacturers and distributors would also have to obtain DEA registration. Interestingly, the

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bill applies to both naturally occurring, and synthetic equivalents of, the delta 9 chemical in marijuana.



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Robyn Vines is a shareholder at GrayRobinson and a member of the Cannabis Industry Team, focusing on the laws that govern the production, processing, marketing, distribution, dispensing, and sale of medical marijuana and cannabis-derived products pursuant to federal and Florida law. Robyn works with all levels of the cannabis industry. She has represented a number of Florida's vertically integrated Medical Marijuana Treatment Center licensees and related investor entities. She also has worked on behalf of domestic growers of hemp and producers of hemp-derived products containing cannabidiol (CBD).