

Legalization of marijuana continues to cause tension

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The decision by Attorney General Jeff Sessions to rescind an Obama-era policy on federal marijuana enforcement sparked an outcry from Republicans and Democrats.

They argue Sessions is trampling on the rights of states that have decided to legalize pot for medical or recreational use, or both.

Pot remains illegal under federal law, and Sessions' new direction lets federal prosecutors in states where marijuana is legal decide how aggressively to enforce that law.

Here's a look at how states have broken with the federal government on pot and the tension that has generated:

THE LEGALIZATION PUSH:

Federal law classifies marijuana, heroin and LSD among the most dangerous drugs, with no currently accepted medical use and a high

potential for abuse. Efforts to change that classification have failed. A federal judge in California in 2015 considered the issue, but then decided it was up to Congress to change the law if it wishes.

An increasing number of states, meanwhile, have legalized marijuana. California led the way in 1996, when voters approved marijuana for medical use. Colorado and Washington became the first two states to legalize recreational marijuana with voter-approved measures in 2012.

Eight states, including California, have now legalized marijuana for recreational use and more than 30 have medical marijuana programs.

Critics of Sessions' decision, including members of the Republican Party, say the federal government should respect the wishes of local voters and stay out of state marijuana choices. They cite the 10th amendment to the U.S.

ON THE WEB

What do you think about legalizing marijuana? Go to www.southern-standard.com to vote in our online poll.

Constitution, which says states have all powers that the constitution does not delegate to the U.S. government or deny them.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAW CLASH:

Marijuana's status as an illegal drug under federal law has led to the prosecution of growers and dispensaries that appear to be operating legally under state law, and Sessions' announcement is raising fears of a possible renewed crackdown. "The states can enact their own laws, but the federal government can say, 'We're going to prosecute people and business-

es,'" said Alex Kreit, a marijuana law expert at the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego. The U.S. Supreme Court in a 2005 ruling said the federal government could prosecute medical marijuana possession in states that had legalized the drug for medical use.

In 2011, California's four U.S. attorneys announced they were going after the state's "widespread and illegal marijuana industry."

Prosecutors threatened landlords with prosecution unless they evicted tenants who were supplying marijuana and moved to seize properties where the drug was sold.

The DOJ under former President Barack Obama said in 2013 it wouldn't interfere with state marijuana laws as long as the states tightly regulated the drug and made efforts to keep it from children, criminal drug cartels and other states.

Still, pot prosecutions continued.

CONGRESS STEPS IN:

In 2014, Obama signed into law a congressional amendment that said the DOJ could not use money allocated by Congress to prevent states that have legalized medical marijuana from implementing laws that permit its use, distribution and possession. A federal appeals court that covers much of the Western U.S. ruled two years ago that the law banned the DOJ from going after medical marijuana users and dispensaries in cases where no state laws were broken. The decision by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals covered California, Washington and seven other states.

While the ruling could complicate efforts to ramp up marijuana prosecutions in those states, it's far from a panacea for marijuana dispensaries and users.

Crime doesn't pay for three burglars

BY **DUANE SHERRILL**
Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Three burglars caught red-handed burglarizing a Forest Park home this past summer have been sentenced.

The burglars, Sheena D. Bates, Carrie St. John and Johnny L. Dawson, were each ordered by Circuit Court Judge Bart Stanley to serve 120 days of four-year sentences and make restitution to the victim of the break-in.

Their jail time comes after a neighbor alerted the homeowner a suspicious vehicle had pulled behind a



residence on Bradford Road.

The homeowner, knowing no one was supposed to be at the residence, called police who arrived and found a man who called himself Johnny Walker. He tried to dash from police, but was caught.

It was then officers figured out he was lying about his name and his true identity was Johnny L. Dawson. Officers returned to the scene to discover Walker was not working alone.

"Sheena D. Bates and Carrie St. John were discov-

ered hiding inside the attic of the home," said McMinnville Police Sgt. Justin Cobble, noting an inspection of the area revealed St. John had fallen through a section of ceiling while attempting to hide from officers, causing about \$500 worth of damage.

Police then found the suspects' truck which was loaded with items the group apparently intended to steal.

The items ranged from pillows and coat hangers to a riding mower.

The property that was already placed on a trailer to steal was valued at \$7,000.

Licensed to sing



Johnathan Bond, a singer with Young Harmony, will be in McMinnville this Sunday, Jan. 7, during the 6 p.m. service at McMinnville Church of God on Locust Street. Everyone is invited.

Ava, William state's top baby names for 2017

NASHVILLE — Ava is the new No. 1 name for baby girls born in Tennessee, rising to the top of the list of the most popular names for babies born in 2017.

William maintains the No. 1 spot as the most popular name chosen for baby boys in Tennessee for the 11th straight year.

The top 10 names Tennessee parents chose for their new babies born in 2017 are based on provisional data.

Ava unseats Emma, which until 2017 had held the top spot for names of baby girls born in Tennessee since 2011. All names in the top 10 list for girls are the same as the top 10 list from 2016, but have changed in ranking.

Samuel and Grayson are both new additions on the top 10 list of boys names in 2017.

The top two names, William and

TOP 10 BABY NAMES	
GIRLS	BOYS
1. Ava	1. William
2. Olivia	2. Elijah
3. Emma	3. James
4. Amelia	4. Noah
5. Harper	5. Liam
6. Isabella	6. John
7. Elizabeth	7. Mason
8. Charlotte	8. Jackson
9. Ella	9. Samuel
10. Abigail	10. Grayson

Elijah, maintained their rankings from 2016. James tied with Elijah for the No. 2 spot in 2016.

Dropping from the top 10 list

since 2016, when there were ties for some rankings for boys names, are Michael, Benjamin, Aiden, Jacob and Carter.

Names chosen for babies are recorded and tallied by the dedicated team in the Tennessee Department of Health Office of Vital Records.

This office maintains the integrity of approximately 15 million records, including issuance and amending records of births, deaths, marriages and divorces that occur in Tennessee.

The Office of Vital Records processes an average of more than 14,000 requests for these certificates every month, serving an average of 650 customers each week.

These requests are submitted in person, by mail, online and via telephone.

Meth stash comes out in wash

BY **DUANE SHERRILL**
Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Charges have been lodged against a Cumberland Caverns Road couple who allegedly tried to stash their meth inside their washing machine when lawmen raided their home.

The suspects, Samantha Grissom Scott, 49, and Scot Alan Bell, 43, are charged with possession of meth and tampering with evidence for their alleged attempt to avoid being caught with the

illegal drugs.

Deputies arrived at Scott's residence looking for a man wanted on outstanding warrants. When they announced their arrival, a man came to the door and then stepped back in, locking the door behind him.

A short standoff ensued with Scott finally coming out of the home about 30 minutes later followed by Bell a few minutes after her. Officers then searched the house. While they did not find the man they were seeking, they did come across a half an ounce of

meth inside a bag. They also smelled a strong chemical odor and followed it into a room that contained a clothes washer.

"Methamphetamine was found in the clothes washer where the strong chemical odor had originated," said sheriff's investigator Steven Carpenter, noting the drugs weighed 4.7 ounces.

The lawman pointed out

there was evidence to tie both suspects to the washing machine meth.

"The door where Scott Bell had come out and went back into the residence when encountered by deputies was the door leading to the laundry room," Carpenter said. "And, Samantha Scott had chemical stains on her shirt that she was wearing."

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