

## NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Aaron Sadler

501-777-5032

[aaron@ghidottcommunications.com](mailto:aaron@ghidottcommunications.com)



### Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association Launches

**LITTLE ROCK** (Aug. 9, 2017) -- A coalition of leaders in health care, agricultural and legal sectors has come together to form the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association, the primary industry group for corporations and individuals involved in the state's new medical marijuana economy.

The Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association will be the leading voice for medical marijuana cultivators, distributors and businesses that serve the industry in the Natural State. The association will engage in the policy making process to advocate for the industry, educate licensees on best practices to help self-regulate the industry, and conduct public education initiatives about the medical marijuana industry at large and the safe use of the drug for medicinal purposes.

"Arkansas voters made clear that they want sensible, safe medical marijuana policy in this state, because they recognize the clear evidence that cannabinoids are effective in pain relief and treating a number of chronic illnesses," said David Couch, board member and acting executive director of the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association. "Our association will be a partnership of all those with a common interest in ensuring the state stays true to the will of the voters and medical marijuana operations are run safely and legally."

A seven-member board will oversee the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association. Board members are:

- Dr. Steven Cathey, Chairman, a neurosurgeon and chairman of the Arkansas State Medical Board. Dr. Cathey, of Little Rock, is board certified in neurological surgery. He was initially appointed to the state Medical Board in 2011 and became the board's chairman this year. A native of Monticello, Dr. Cathey has been practicing for more than 35 years.
- David Couch, partner at David A. Couch, PLLC. Couch authored Amendment 98 to legalize medical marijuana and directed the statewide campaign to pass the constitutional amendment. In addition to his work in the medical marijuana industry, Couch has established himself as one of the top legal advocates for elder Arkansans and is a member of the Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents and the National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform in Washington, D.C. where he served on the board of directors for several years. Couch is a native of Newport and a life-long Arkansan.
- Stephen LaFrance, former executive vice president of Arkansas-based USA Drug, which was the nation's largest privately-owned pharmacy chain when it sold its 157 pharmacies to Walgreens in 1992. LaFrance, of Little Rock, is principal officer and owner of Dale Capital Partners Inc. A

Pine Bluff native, LaFrance is a founding investor and board member of Greenwoods State Bank of Lake Mills, Wis., and is the founder of the Arkansas Junior Tennis Foundation.

- Dustin McDaniel, partner at the Little Rock law firm McDaniel, Richardson and Calhoun. McDaniel was a two-term state Attorney General. As a legislator, he was chairman of the Joint Committee on Health Insurance and Prescription Drugs. McDaniel began his career as a police officer in his hometown of Jonesboro. Now, as co-chairman of the national Society of Attorneys General Emeritus (SAGE), McDaniel continues to work to protect the interests of children and families.
- Dr. Richard Douglas, managing partner at PMK Associates, a Virginia-based marketing and communications firm. Dr. Douglas is a former assistant deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture under President Reagan and member of President George H.W. Bush's Export Advisory Council and was senior vice president for corporate affairs for Sun Diamond Growers of California.
- Kris Krane, president of 4Front Ventures, a holding company with subsidiaries that have developed the premier best practice operating standards for retail medical marijuana dispensaries. Before forming 4Front, Krane was director of client services for CannBe. He is on the boards of Students for Sensible Drug Policy, the National Cannabis Industry Association, Marijuana Majority, and Common Sense for Drug Policy.
- Dan Roda, general counsel and development lead at Rock Capital Group. Roda provides legal and consulting services to start-ups, private individuals, and closely-held companies on matters including corporate and securities law, mergers and acquisitions, cannabis industry regulation, and estate and tax planning.

Full membership is open to medical marijuana cultivators and distributors, with associate memberships available to businesses and organizations related to the industry. Membership applications and more information about the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Association will be forthcoming on the association's website, [ARMedicalMarijuana.org](http://ARMedicalMarijuana.org). If interested in applying to become a member, email [members@armedicalmarijuana.org](mailto:members@armedicalmarijuana.org).

Amendment 98 of the Arkansas Constitution, known as the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Amendment, was ratified by the state's voters last November. The state Medical Marijuana Commission is currently accepting applications for cultivation licenses. Deadline for applications is Sept. 18.

###