

New Congressional Marijuana Bill Is Actually Numbered H.R. 420



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Policy

f In a hat tip to marijuana culture, lawmakers on Capitol Hill have [officially reserved the number H.R. 420](#) for a bill that would dramatically change federal cannabis laws.

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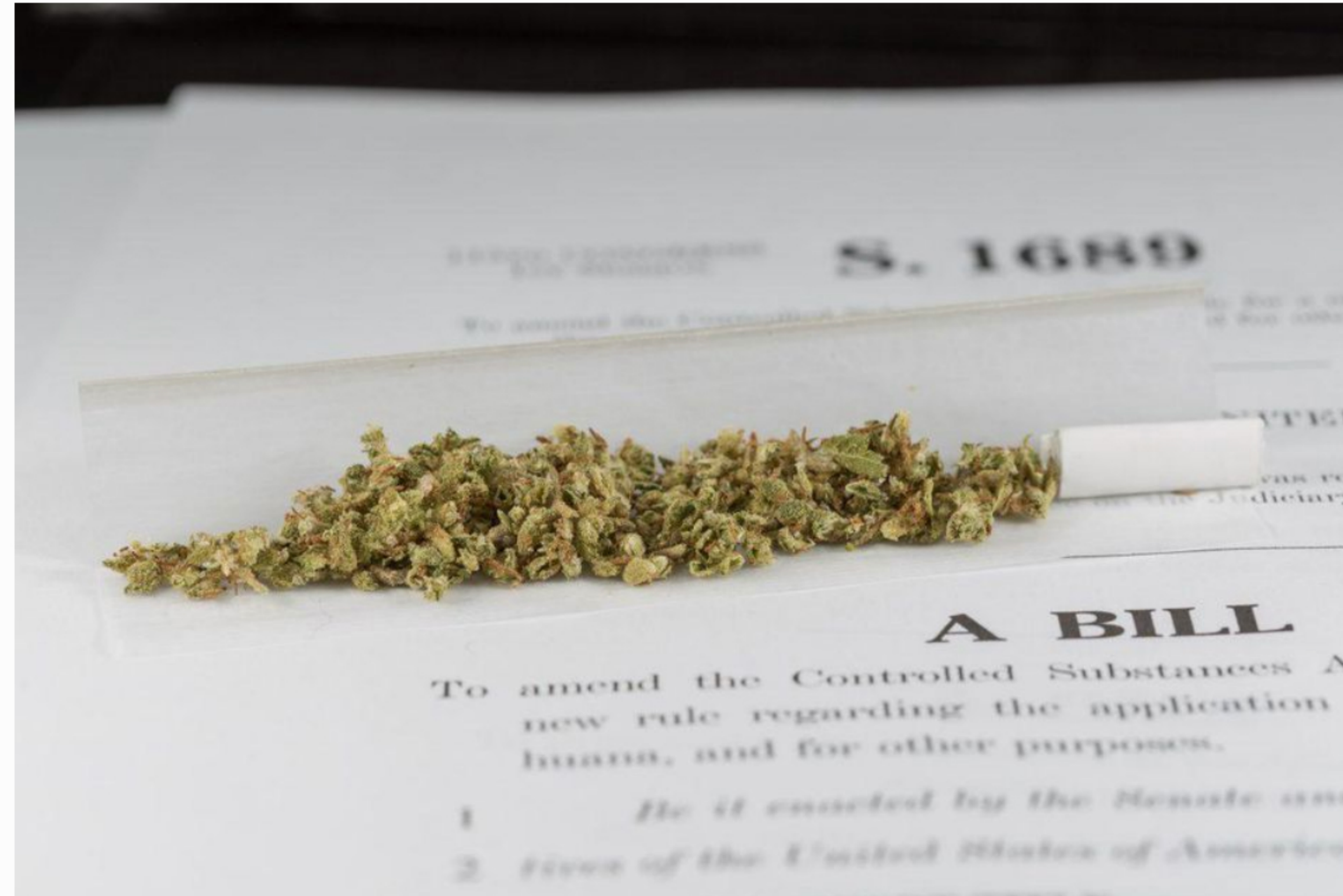


Photo by Tom Sydow PHOTO BY TOM SYDOW

420, of course, is a special number for marijuana enthusiasts, who celebrate the plant extra hard every April 20.

The new bill filed in the House on Wednesday by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) is titled the Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol Act. If passed, it would remove cannabis from the federal Controlled Substances Act.

“While the bill number may be a bit tongue in cheek, the issue is very serious. Our federal marijuana laws are outdated, out of touch and have negatively impacted countless lives,” Blumenauer said in a press release. “Congress cannot continue to be out of touch with a movement that a growing majority of Americans support. It’s time to end this senseless prohibition.”

This isn't the first time that 420 has worked its way into official legislative numbering.

California’s first effort to create statewide medical cannabis regulations was through a bill numbered [SB 420](#) in 2003.

In 2017, a Rhode Island senator filed a marijuana legalization bill given the designation of [S 420](#).

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And on Capitol Hill, the first time the House voted on measure to block the Department of Justice from interfering with state medical cannabis laws, it was through an amendment considered under 2003’s [Roll Call 420](#).

The current [legislation](#), which Blumenauer picked up from former Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO), who was [sworn in on Tuesday as Colorado's new governor](#), would also transfer cannabis enforcement authority from Drug Enforcement Administration to a renamed Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Firearms and Explosives.

A similarly renamed Alcohol, Tobacco and Marijuana Tax and Trade Bureau within the Department of the Treasury would also have oversight authority, as would the Food and Drug Administration. Federal permits would be issued for cultivating, packaging, selling and importing marijuana.

Shipping or transporting marijuana into states that have not legalized it would be prohibited.

Last Congress, Polis's version of the bill garnered 26 cosponsors.

Separately, Blumenauer, a co-chair of the [Congressional Cannabis Caucus](#), recently released a [step-by-step plan to federally legalize marijuana in 2019](#).

His new bill is the [third piece](#) of [standalone cannabis legislation](#) filed in the new Congress, which began last week.

Tom Angell publishes [Marijuana Moment](#). Follow him on [Twitter](#) for breaking news, [subscribe to his daily newsletter](#) and [support cannabis journalism on Patreon](#).



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I'm a 15-year veteran of the cannabis law reform movement, and I know where to look to spot the most interesting legalization developments. I'm the editor of the cannabi... [Read More](#)