

Feds say they won't sue over pot use in Washington, Colorado

SEATTLE — Attorney General Eric Holder announced Thursday the federal government would not sue recreational pot users in Washington or Colorado.

Holder contacted Gov. Jay Inslee and Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper to tell them the federal government would continue to enforce eight areas of concern that include such areas as drug distribution to minors and ensuring that pot grown within the two states stays within their borders.

The two states legalized recreational marijuana use and possession in the November 2012 general election. Marijuana does remain illegal under the federal Controlled Substances Act.

Holder also sent a memo to federal prosecutors in each state regarding tightening federal marijuana prosecution standards, CNN reported.

In a statement, Inslee said, “We want to thank the Attorney General for working with the states on this and for finding a way that allows our initiative to move forward while maintaining a commitment to fighting illegal drugs. This reflects a balanced approach by the federal government that respects the states’ interests in implementing these laws and recognizes the federal government’s role in fighting illegal drugs and criminal activity.”

This is not the first indication the federal government was examining its approach in prosecuting recreational users in states that legalized pot use. In December, President Obama made a statement that it was not logical for the federal government to continue to pursue and prosecute recreational marijuana users.