

Native American tribes converge to discuss pot legalization

February 27 2015, byGene Johnson



Audience members look on at a tribal marijuana conference for tribal governments considering whether to legalize marijuana for medicinal, agricultural, or recreational use, Friday, Feb. 27, 2015, in Tulalip, Wash. Representatives of 75 American Indian tribes from 35 states gathered to discuss what might be the next big financial boon on reservations across the country: marijuana. Tribes have been exploring the idea of getting into the pot business since the Obama administration announced in December it wouldn't stand in their way. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

(AP)—Tribal representatives from around the country are converging in Washington state to discuss the risks and rewards of marijuana legalization.

Tribes have been wrestling with the issue since the U.S. Justice Department announced in December that it wouldn't stand in their way if they want to approve pot for medical or recreational use. The agency said tribes must follow the same law enforcement priorities laid out for states that legalize the drug.

Representatives of dozens of tribes are attending a conference Friday at the Tulalip Indian Tribe's resort and casino north of Seattle.

Topics under discussion include the big business potential for pot, as well as concerns about [substance abuse](#) on reservations and the potential creation of a tribal cannabis association.



Speakers, from right, Hilary Bricken, Douglas Berman, Salvador Mungia and Robert Odawi Porter bow their heads during an opening prayer at a tribal marijuana conference for tribal governments considering whether to legalize marijuana for medicinal, agricultural, or recreational use, Friday, Feb. 27, 2015,

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