

To the Bag

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Supreme Court of the United States
Reporter of Decisions
Washington, D. C. 20543

MEMORANDUM TO THE CONFERENCE April 22, 1986

FROM: Henry C. Lind, Reporter of Decisions

RE: Spelling of "marijuana"

I have now received all votes but one. There were four votes for "marijuana," one vote for "marihuana," and three Justices gave me their proxies, which I have cast for "marijuana." Therefore, the spelling from now on should be with a "j." I hope that this will settle the matter.

HCL
HCL

To the *Bag*:

I enjoyed Professor Myers's careful study of when "the United States" became clearly a singular noun in the Supreme Court. *Supreme Court Usage and the Making of an 'Is'*, 11 GREEN BAG 2D 457. Along the lines of the saying about progress in science, I believe this article shows that writing styles evolve more through old writers dying off than through living writers changing their habits.

Robert A. James
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To the *Bag*:

The recent article by Minor Myers, *Supreme Court Usage and the Making of an 'Is'* (11 GREEN BAG 2D 457), depicts in abundant detail how Supreme Court prevailing usage started off to say "the United States are" as if the plural was describing a collection of independent states. That was before the Civil War. The article went on to demonstrate how after the Civil War, although somewhat gradually – and a little more slowly than has sometimes been thought – the prevailing Supreme Court usage in opinions shifted to the singular "the United States is."