

**WHY:**

- It lets media and the public know what you're doing
- It might get media to show up and interview you
- It gets our issue and your chapter in front of peoples' eyes

**WHEN TO WRITE ONE:**

- Any time you are hosting a large event (expecting more than 50 people to show up)
- Any time a drug policy bill is introduced/voted on in your state legislature
- Any time there is drug policy news in your area and you want your commentary to be included in the story, for example:
  - New school drug testing policies
  - Medical marijuana patient arrested
  - Local news coverage will want commentary from local experts. Be those experts.

**HOW TO WRITE ONE:**

- If the release is for an event: include who, what, when, where, why
- If the release is for a bill that was introduced: what happened, why you're in support or opposed to it, what you're doing about it, why it's important and timely
- Utilize our template available on [ssdp.org/resources/press-releases](https://ssdp.org/resources/press-releases)
- Email your Outreach Director for guidance, edits, revisions, suggestions, etc.

**WHERE TO SEND IT:**

- School newspaper(s), radio station, TV station
- Local news outlets (aim for at least 5)
- News desks, reporters who have covered related issues in the past

**HELPFUL TIPS:**

- Be timely - if your press release is too late, it's no longer newsworthy
  - If the release is for an event, make sure you send it out at least two weeks prior to the event
- Press releases should be no longer than one page at the most



## EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

### **University of Tampa to Host Marijuana Legalization Debate on Monday**

**Students for Sensible Drug Policy Executive Director Aaron Houston will debate former White House official Kevin Sabet**

*For Immediate Release: February 13, 2013*

*Contact: Evan Eisenberg, (813) 892-4414*

TAMPA, Florida -- Leading drug policy reform advocate Aaron Houston will debate Kevin Sabet, former senior advisor at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, at the University of Tampa on February 18. The debate will take place at 7:30 p.m. in Fletcher Lounge, Plant Hall and is free and open to the public.

Houston will debate the pro-marijuana legalization position and Sabet will debate the anti-legalization position. The debate will be moderated by Keith Cate, a co-anchor of WFLA News Channel 8, and Sarah-Beth Hopton, a former political journalist at the Pentagon and a current Ph.D. student at the University of South Florida.

Sabet was called "Legalization Enemy #1" by Rolling Stone Magazine in January 2013. Prior to coming to Students for Sensible Drug Policy, Houston served as the only full time marijuana lobbyist on Capitol Hill for five years.

"I'm looking forward to a vigorous exchange of ideas with Kevin," Houston said.

*Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) is the largest organization in the world dedicated to ending the war on drugs, with chapters on more than 200 campuses around the globe. At heart, SSDP is a grassroots organization, led by a student-run board of directors who oversee the work of our professional staff in Washington, D.C. We create change bringing together students of all political and ideological stripes to have honest conversations about drugs and drug policy.*

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