



Banks Refusing Legal Pot's Proceeds

By David Downs
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Freshly legal marijuana in Colorado and Washington is highlighting the [hypocrisy](#) in America's banking industry.

Over the past few years, national banks like BofA, Chase, and Wells Fargo have closed any checking accounts and credit-debit readers linked to legal cannabis businesses in San Francisco, California and other medical marijuana states. Banks say they don't want to [violate the federal Anti-Money Laundering Act](#), which calls for fines of \$500,000 per illicit transaction, and cannabis remains federally illegal.

Meanwhile, this same banking industry is getting slaps on the wrist for their roles in laundering tens of billions of dollars in [drug cartel cash](#), transfers to terrorist groups and [ponzi scheme](#) proceeds.

One anti-money laundering expert, Robert Mazur, author of *The Infiltrator*, and former undercover detective and expert on dirty bankers, calls the double standard "hypocrisy", in the February [issue](#) of national medical marijuana trade publication *CULTURE* Magazine.

Banks are not only [too big to jail](#), experts say. They're an enforcement arm of federal pot prohibition.

"There's not really a separation between the biggest banks and our government," said [Mark Calabria](#), director of financial regulation studies at The Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank in Washington D.C., in the *CULTURE* story.