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## People line up to legally buy pot in California

OAKLAND (AP) — It wasn't exactly reefer madness Monday as California launched the first legal sales of recreational marijuana, but those who could find the drug celebrated the historic day, lining up early for ribbon cuttings, freebies and offerings ranging from cookies to gummy bears to weed with names like "heaven mountain" and "alien rock candy."

Jeff Deakin, 66, his wife Mary and their dog waited in the cold all night to be first in a line of 100 people when Harborside dispensary, a longtime medical pot shop in Oakland, opened at 6 a.m. and offered early customers joints for a penny and free T-shirts that read "Flower to the People — Cannabis for All."

"It's been so long since others and myself could walk into a place where you could feel safe and secure and be able to get something that was good without having to go to the back alley," Deakin said. "This is kind of a big deal for everybody."

Harborside founder Steve DeAngelo used a giant pair of scissors to cut a green ribbon, declaring, "With these scissors I dub thee free," before ringing up the first customer at a cash register.

Sales were brisk in the shops lucky to score one of the roughly 100 state licenses issued so far, but customers in some of the state's largest cities were out of luck. Los Angeles and San Francisco hadn't authorized shops in time to get state licenses and other cities, such as Riverside and Fresno, blocked sales altogether.

Licensed shops are concentrated in the San Francisco Bay Area, San Diego, around Palm Springs, San Jose and Santa Cruz, where the KindPeoples shop tacked up a banner Monday declaring, "Prohibition is Over!"

The state banned what it called "loco-weed" in 1913, though it has eased criminal penalties for use of the drug since the 1970s and was the first state to legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes in 1996.

California voters in 2016 made it legal for adults 21 and older to grow, possess and use limited quantities of marijuana, but it wasn't legal to sell it for recreational purposes until Monday.

The nation's most populous state now joins a growing list of states, and the nation's capital, where so-called recreational marijuana is permitted even though the federal government continues to classify pot as a controlled substance,

like heroin and LSD.

The signs that California was tripping toward legal pot sales were evident well before the stroke of midnight. California highways flashed signs before New Year's Eve that said "Drive high, Get a DUI," reflecting law enforcement concerns about stoned drivers. Weedmaps, the phone app that allows customers to rate shops, delivery services and shows their locations, ran a full-page ad Sunday in the *Los Angeles Times* that said, "Smile California. It's Legal."

\*DRUG