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LEGALIZING MARIJUANA IS WRONG FOR AMERICA

MARIJUANA IS A DANGEROUS DRUG. It can cause permanent brain damage and loss of IQ by up to 8 points by age 38,¹ birth defects and death to babies in the womb,² mental illness including schizophrenia³ and paranoia, and addiction.⁴ Marijuana causes health problems including cancer of the head, nose and throat and is a major cause of testicular cancer in young males.⁵ It can cause chronic bronchitis and respiratory problems, and elevates the risk of heart attack 4 times 1 hour after smoking.⁶ Because of these and other harms, smoked and edible marijuana remains a FDA Schedule 1 Controlled Substance that cannot be legally prescribed by any licensed physician.

TAX REVENUES WILL PALE IN RELATION TO THE ADDED SOCIAL COSTS. As with alcohol and tobacco, for every dollar collected in taxes, the economic impact on Americans is 10 to 12 times greater. It is no different with marijuana. Legalization will vastly increase its use, and in turn will increase the social and economic impact of virtually every aspect of life in America. Alcohol consumption tripled after prohibition was repealed. Predictions are the same for marijuana if legalized.

THE COST OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE. The annual cost of substance abuse to the U.S. was reported to be \$510.8 BILLION (Alcohol: \$191.6, Tobacco: \$167.8, and Drugs \$151.4) according to the 2009 U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse Prevention Dollars and Cents: A Cost Benefit Analysis. (Harwood, 200). These figures were based on the year 1999, so are conservative. California collects \$318 million in taxes on alcohol vs economic costs of \$38.4 billion. Average costs for ambulatory addiction treatment are \$4,000 per episode, with 4 to 5 relapses before it "sticks," and \$18,000 for residential treatment if successful.⁷

MARIJUANA DOES KILL, JUST NOT BY OVERDOSE.

Almost all of the 122 Americans who die daily started their drug journey with pot, and Marijuana Use Disorder is associated with higher mortality. Those treated for addiction to marijuana had a higher mortality rate (3.85 times higher than controls), higher if compared to death rate risk of Cocaine Use Disorder (2.95) and Alcohol Use Disorder (3.83), but lower than Opioid Use Disorder (5.71) or Methamphetamine Use Disorder (4.67).⁸

MARIJUANA LEADS TO ADDICTION AND OTHER ILLICIT DRUGS.

"The risk for other illicit drug initiation appeared 21 times higher among cannabis experimenters and 124 times higher among daily cannabis users than among non-users."⁹ 17% of those who initiate marijuana use under 18 and 9% of those who do so after 18 will become addicted. Addiction ruins lives.

MARIJUANA USE IMPEDES GOOD JUDGMENT AND INCREASES CRIME AND TRAFFIC FATALITIES.

52-87% of people arrested in America test positive for drugs and the majority (35-53%) test positive for marijuana.¹⁰ They are not arrested for simple possession, but because mental impairment and addiction lead to crimes. 66% of prisoners are addicted to alcohol or drugs, and 33% are mentally ill.¹¹ Marijuana impairment doubles the risk of traffic accidents and death. (Crancer, 2009)

MARIJUANA USE WILL NOT REDUCE OUR PRISON POPULATION.

Less than .03% of federal prisoners are there for simple possession. Those arrested averaged 115 pounds of marijuana in their possession. Simple possession of one ounce of marijuana is now an infraction with a non-escalating fine of \$100 in California and several states. Legalization won't save money. Nobody goes to jail now

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TO SAY MARIJUANA WILL ONLY BE LEGAL FOR THOSE OVER 21 IS RIDICULOUS.

Alcohol is the most abused drug by kids because it's readily available at home. What will you say to your kid? "Don't touch my stash." Get serious! In addition, because of the ruse of "medical marijuana," 18 year old kids can get a doctor's recommendation for any purported cause and buy all the pot they want. Are you going to change "medical marijuana" laws to minimum age 21? A recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health revealed a staggering 50% increase in daily marijuana use among those 12 years and up. The perceived risk of smoking once a month has fallen almost 30% since 2007.

AMERICA IS BOUND BY INTERNATIONAL TREATIES since 1961 and 1971 to enforce anti-drug activities that threaten citizens of all countries. If our agreements among nations are no good, how can we expect other countries to honor or trust the US. As President Calderon of Mexico stated, America has no "moral authority" to ask other countries to enforce anti-drug activities if our own states legalize marijuana.

AMERICA HAS DECLINED TO 26TH IN THE WORLD ACADEMICALLY WITH 1.2 MILLION HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUTS ANNUALLY. According to a UC Santa Barbara Study¹² the lifetime cost of a high school dropout is \$392,000. That equates to an annual cost to the US of \$470 billion. Marijuana is a major causal factor in the dropout problem, as well as diminished academic achievement. 80% of the prison population are high school dropouts. (UC Santa Barbara Research)

LEGALIZATION WILL NOT GET RID OF THE BLACK MARKET. According to SAMHSA statistics, marijuana use peaks at age 19. The two age groups with the highest consumption of marijuana are 18-25 followed by 12-17, peaking at age 19 and 20. All those under 21 will comprise a black market and as evidenced in Colorado, 40% of the market will still be served by cartels because they don't pay taxes and can sell their pot for less money.

Some counties allow cultivation of 99 plants. That equates to 118,000 to 594,000 joints based on 1 to 5 lbs of produce per plant. Turf wars will erupt as they have in Mexico, with all of the bloodshed and corruption we have already witnessed with "medical marijuana." By necessity, to get rid of the vast increase in supply, marijuana will be diverted to every state, and beyond. After 40 years and over a trillion dollars spent to eradicate cultivation in Narco states, America is well on its way already to become one, to the dismay of most Americans and all of our international partners.

IMPACT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT. Since the federal government is not enforcing narcotics laws, the burden of public safety has fallen to local law enforcement and private citizens. Tax dollars weren't saved. They just passed the buck. To make matters worse, Congress voted to without federal funds so the DEA can't enforce federal law where states have legalized or decriminalized marijuana. The federal government has essentially legalized an illicit drug, so the burden of protecting our kids who are in the cross hairs lies with grass roots citizens.

FEDERAL REMEDIES. Federal CSA laws pertaining to marijuana are based on scientific evidence and are not wrong. Marijuana use is detrimental to the health, safety and economic well-being of all Americans. Certainly there is no justification for rewarding states like Colorado or Washington with federal subsidies when they openly violate federal laws. In so doing, they inflict death, destruction, diminished academic achievement and productivity, increased mental illness, more addiction, more welfare, more traffic accidents, more death and huge economic impacts on all US taxpayers. **Economic sanctions must be imposed** against any state that openly violates federal laws. We punish criminals for breaking the law. Why should states be treated differently?

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN PROTECT OUR NATION JUST SAY NO TO LEGALIZATION

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