

Regulation Works! It's Time for a New Approach to Marijuana

Marijuana is objectively less harmful than alcohol for the consumer and the community.

- Marijuana is far less toxic, less addictive, and less harmful to the body than alcohol. Unlike alcohol, it does not contribute to violent and reckless behavior. It is irrational to punish adults and make them criminals simply for using a substance that is far safer than alcohol.

Marijuana prohibition is just as ineffective, wasteful, and harmful as alcohol prohibition.

- Just like alcohol prohibition, marijuana prohibition does not eliminate use of the product and simply steers all of the profits to the underground market. It is time we have it produced and sold in a legitimate, regulated market.
- As long as marijuana production is illegal, its production will often be tied to bloodshed and environmental destruction. Criminal marijuana growers often hide their operations in national forests and wilderness areas, diverting waterways, leaving behind batteries and diesel fuel, and causing great environmental damage. Marijuana sales should not benefit harmful behavior.
- Prohibiting marijuana steers consumers into the underground market, where they can be exposed to other more dangerous drugs. In addition, illegal marijuana dealers are not subject to quality standards, and they do not test or label their products.
- Arresting, citing, and prosecuting marijuana offenders diverts police time away from crimes with victims. Nationally, 87% of all motor vehicle thefts and over 70% of robberies go unsolved, while law enforcement pursues over half a million arrests for marijuana possession. Regulating marijuana would free up law enforcement time and resources to focus on real crime.

Regulating and taxing marijuana like alcohol would create barriers to teens' access to marijuana.

- Marijuana prohibition isn't keeping marijuana out of the hands of youth. Year after year, more than 80% of high school seniors nationwide report that marijuana is "very easy" or "fairly easy" to get. Nationally, more high schoolers report using marijuana in the past 30 days than smoking cigarettes, according to the most recent data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Strict enforcement of regulations, along with public education, has been effective in reducing teen tobacco use. We can do the same thing with marijuana.
- Drug dealers don't ask for ID. We need to have marijuana sold in regulated stores where employees ask for proof of age, and it is only sold to adults.

Regulating and taxing marijuana like alcohol would bolster state economies with significant new tax revenue and job creation.

- Regulated marijuana sales could produce revenue for states in the form of licensing fees as well as sales and excise taxes, generating millions of dollars in revenue each year.
- Regulating marijuana like alcohol would create hundreds of new legal jobs and generate business for a variety of other industries.