



Regulation Works: It's Time for a New Approach to Cannabis

Cannabis 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, cannabis 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 cannabis production is illegal, its production will often be tied to bloodshed and environmental destruction. Criminal cannabis 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 cannabis steers consumers into the underground market, where they can be exposed to other more dangerous drugs. In addition, illegal cannabis dealers are not subject to quality standards, and they do not test or label their products.
- Arresting, citing, and prosecuting cannabis 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 cannabis possession. Regulating cannabis would free up law enforcement time and resources to focus on real crime.

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

- Cannabis prohibition isn't keeping it out of the hands of youth. Year after year, more than 80% of high school seniors nationwide report that cannabis is "very easy" or "fairly easy" to get. Nationally, more high schoolers report using cannabis 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 cannabis.

- Drug dealers don't ask for ID. We need to have cannabis sold in regulated stores where employees ask for proof of age, and it is only sold to adults.
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Regulating and taxing cannabis like alcohol would bolster state economies with significant new tax revenue and job creation.

- Regulated cannabis 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 cannabis like alcohol would create hundreds of new legal jobs and generate business for a variety of other industries.
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