



Delaware: Regulation Works!

It's Time for a New Approach to Cannabis

Taxing and regulating cannabis will create thousands of new jobs and bring in millions in taxes. Colorado brought in more than \$240 million in adult-use cannabis tax revenue in fiscal year 2018. The cannabis industry will also create thousands of good jobs for Delawareans; Colorado has issued over 40,000 active licenses to individuals to work directly in the cannabis industry.

Prohibition breeds violence. As with alcohol prohibition in the 1920s, since drug-related disputes can't be solved lawfully, violence is inevitable. As a result, cannabis users and sellers are vulnerable to assaults due to prohibition. In a regulated system, cannabis will be produced and sold by legitimate, taxpaying businesses instead of drug cartels and criminals.

Regulation keeps cannabis sales away from schools. Unlike licensed businesses selling liquor or tobacco, sellers of cannabis are pushed underground and operate virtually anywhere. More than 40% of high schoolers know a peer who sells cannabis in school, while less than 1% have a peer who sells alcohol. Regulating cannabis would move sales into safe, licensed retail stores where workers check ID, instead of schools. According to the most comprehensive surveys, no state has seen an overall increase in teen marijuana use outside of the confidence interval since adult-use laws passed. Meanwhile, two nationwide surveys showed a modest decrease in teen use since states began legalizing cannabis for adults.

Public education works to address public health concerns. As a result of strict regulations on cigarette sales and advertising, plus a robust public education campaign, cigarette smoking by teens has declined by 84% since 1997. A portion of tax revenues generated from taxing cannabis can be used to fund public education and law enforcement training to combat driving under the influence.

Prohibition makes control impossible. Prohibition deprives workers and the environment of the legal protections they are entitled to. It also guarantees cannabis won't undergo quality control testing, resulting in possible contamination by hazardous pesticides, bacteria, or the lacing of cannabis with other drugs. Regulated retailers will sell only products that have been lab-tested and labeled for potency.

Regulation would improve the fairness and efficiency of the criminal justice system. While Delaware's decriminalization law was an important reform, it is no substitute for regulating cannabis for adults' use. A \$100 fine can be an extreme hardship to low-income residents.

Regulation can free up resources so police can focus on more serious crimes and also help improve police/ community relationships. In the U.S. in 2017, less than 46 percent of violent crimes and 17.6 percent of property crimes were cleared, according to FBI data. Data published in *Police Quarterly* showed a higher percentage of some crimes were solved after legalization in both Colorado and Washington. Additionally, a Department of Justice study found that trusting relationships

with the local community was one of the most important factors in whether police were effective in solving violent crimes.

Cannabis is safer than alcohol. The Institute of Medicine has found cannabis to be far less addictive than alcohol or tobacco. Unlike alcohol, cannabis has never caused a fatal overdose and is not associated with violent crime and domestic violence. Adults should be able to make the safer choice.

There is overwhelming support for adult-use cannabis legalization. A 2018 poll conducted by the University of Delaware found that 61 percent of Delawareans think “that the use of marijuana should be made legal.” Furthermore, an October 2018 Gallup poll found 66 percent of Americans support making marijuana use legal for adults.