



**Cannabis prohibition is a costly, failed policy that is just as ineffective and as problematic as alcohol prohibition, and the negative consequences are creating conflict within our communities in Delaware.**

**Harmful and Collateral Consequences of Cannabis Prohibition Include:**

- Infringes Upon Individual/Constitutional Rights and Freedoms
- Subjects over 100,000 Delaware consumers (13.87% of adults) to the criminal justice system and the dangers of the criminal market.<sup>1</sup> (Appx.101,811 people, with an estimated adult population of 734,042.)
- Exacerbates Social Injustices and Perpetuates Delaware’s Current Societal Problems – A criminal record handicaps employment, education, housing and other opportunities.
- Contributes to Racial Disparities – In Delaware, African Americans are three times (3x) more likely to be arrested for cannabis despite similar usage rates <sup>3</sup>, as well as more likely to be charged with a higher degree of severity for similar possession quantities. Other Delaware reports like *Race and Incarceration in Delaware* show further disparities in sentencing and treatment options, as well.
- Greatly Contributes to the Mass Incarceration Epidemic and Prison Overcrowding <sup>5</sup>
- Overburdens Criminal Justice System with a Victimless Issue
- Costly Enforcement Efforts and Taxpayers’ Burden Contributes to Budget Deficit – Delaware wastes millions annually in enforcement expenditures, not including indigent defense, treatment, etc.
- Dangerous Illicit Market Creates Crime and Violence <sup>6</sup>
- Lucrative Cash Crop w/Illicit Market Control Funds Firearms and Other Illegal Activity
- Diverts Police Focus and Resources Away From Public Safety to Enforce a Victimless Issue - In 2013, there were over 2,600 non-violent/victimless arrests for cannabis, (avg. 7 arrests per day), while 46 % of all serious crime with actual victims went unsolved, including: 56% Homicides, 70% Serious Property Crime, 68% Robberies, 76% Burglaries, 84% Motor Vehicle Thefts, 70% Arsons, 28% Sexual Offenses. <sup>7</sup>
- Impedes Police/Community Relations and Efforts Aimed at Solving Serious Crime
- Illicit Market Enables Underage Cannabis Purchases/Use
- Illicit Market Creates the "Gateway" Effect by Exposing Consumers To Hard Drugs

**This failed, costly policy has had no effect on reducing the supply, demand, or use of cannabis, and is seemingly devoid of plausible goals and measurable objectives. In Washington D.C., our nation’s capital, residents can legally cultivate six cannabis plants, possess two ounces, and gift up to one ounce to other adults, regardless of residency. Does it make sense to continue to enforce this antiquated policy in our State?**

<p><b>Research shows cannabis is considerably safer than alcohol, suggesting the law is based on mere conjecture.</b></p>		
<p><b>Overdose Deaths</b>  <small>* Center For Disease Control. (2015) <i>Alcohol Fast Facts</i>  <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/alcohol.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/alcohol.htm</a>  <small># U.S. Department of Justice  DEA. (2015) <i>Drugs of Abuse, Uses and Effects</i> p73  <a href="http://www.justice.gov/dea/docs/drugs_of_abuse_2015.pdf">http://www.justice.gov/dea/docs/drugs_of_abuse_2015.pdf</a></small></small></p>	<p><b>29,000 deaths annually *</b></p>	<p><b>“No death from overdose of marijuana has been reported.” #</b></p>
<p><b>Addiction Rate</b>  <small>Institute of Medicine at the Nation Academy of Science Joy. JE, et al., (1999) <i>Marijuana and medicine: Assessing the science base</i>. Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Science. Washington DC: National Academy Press p 95</small></p>	<p><b>15%</b></p>	<p><b>9%</b></p>
<p><b>Societal Harms</b>  <small>* U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1998) <i>National Crime Victimization Survey: Alcohol and Crime</i>. <a href="http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ac.pdf">http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ac.pdf</a>  <small># Dept. of Family Medicine, Blondell, R.D., et al., (2005) <i>Toxicology Screening Results: Injury Associations Among Hospitalized Trauma Patients</i>. Journal of Trauma 58 p561-70</small></small></p>	<p><b>“40% of all murders and Violent Crime  37% of all rapes and sexual assaults  2/3rds [of all] domestic violence” *</b></p>	<p><b>“Not associated with violent or non violent injuries requiring hospitalization.” #</b></p>

**Four states have now taxed and regulated cannabis in a manner similar to alcohol for adults 21 or older, and several other states are slated to follow suit this year. 61 % of Delaware Voters Agree with this sensible, science-based approach. <sup>8</sup>**

**Benefits of Taxation & Regulation Include:**

- Decreases Cannabis Offense Arrests
- Immediate Savings on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Expenditures
- Reduces Strain on Criminal Justice System and Prison System
- Helps Focus Police Manpower and Resources on Serious Crimes with Actual Victims
- Generates Economic Development for the State
- Creates a Continual Revenue Stream/Substantial Increase in State Revenue – CO taxes: 2014: \$40.9M 2015: \$72.4M <sup>9</sup>. A portion was earmarked for education, youth programs, law enforcement and other state needs.
- Creates Many Jobs in Diverse Fields – This existing industry created over 10,000 jobs in CO, dropping their unemployment rate to 3.5%. <sup>10</sup> Once regulated, this already existing employment also generates income taxes.
- Stimulates the Local/State Economy
- Increases Property Value and Demand <sup>11</sup>
- Significantly Reduces Illicit Market and Illegal Funds Associated With Drug Sales <sup>12</sup>
- Decreases Crime and Violence Associated with Illicit Market and “Turf Control” <sup>13</sup>
- Reduces Teen Use by Setting the Legal Age of Introduction at 21 & Implementing “We Card” Programs<sup>14</sup>
- Eliminates the Gateway Effect by Not Exposing Consumers to Hard Drugs
- Allows Adults to Make an Informed Decision To Choose a Safer Alternative to Alcohol
- Decreases Opiate Overdose Fatalities <sup>15</sup>

Without voter initiative in Delaware, the only way to change the law, is to actively engage those that make the law. Delaware can't afford not to tax and regulate cannabis like alcohol.

**Don't Let the 1st State be the Last to Make this Much Needed Change!**

**Citation**

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- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2016). *Quick Facts*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/10>
- <sup>3</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. (2013). *The War on Marijuana in Black and White*. p147
- <sup>4</sup> The Delaware Statistical Analysis Center. (2011). *Race and Incarceration in Delaware* [http://cjc.delaware.gov/pdf/Race\\_Incarceration.pdf](http://cjc.delaware.gov/pdf/Race_Incarceration.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> Barrich, C. (2013). *Those Held on Minor Charges Fill Delaware Prisons*. Delaware News Journal
- <sup>6</sup> Barrich, C., et al. (2015). *Hockessin law grad's deadly 'double life'*. Delaware News Journal <http://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/local/2015/09/18/hockessin-law-grads-deadly-double-life/72404484/>
- <sup>7</sup> Statistical Analysis Center Salt, J. (2014). *Crime in Delaware 2009 - 2013 An Analysis of Serious Crime in Delaware*. Delaware Criminal Justice Council <http://cjc.delaware.gov/sac/pdf/Crime/Crime%20in%20Delaware%202009-2013.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> Center For Political Communication. (2016). Survey: Delawareans rank jobs and public safety as top issues. University of Delaware.
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- <sup>12</sup> Grillo, I. (2015). *U.S. Legalization of Marijuana Has Hit Mexican Cartels' Cross-Border Trade*. Time Magazine <http://time.com/3801889/us-legalization-marijuana-trade/> Time
- <sup>13</sup> Colorado Bureau of Investigations Division of Local Government. (2015). *2014 Colorado Reported Statewide Crimes*. [http://crimeinco.cbi.state.co.us/cic2k14/state%20totals/statewide\\_offense.html](http://crimeinco.cbi.state.co.us/cic2k14/state%20totals/statewide_offense.html)
- <sup>14</sup> World Health Organization. (2008). *Toward a Global View of Alcohol, Tobacco, Cannabis, and Cocaine Use: Findings from the WHO World Health Surveys*. Public Library of Science Medicine Vol.5 No. 7:p.1057
- <sup>15</sup> Bachhuber, M., et al. (2014). *Medical Cannabis Laws and Opioid Analgesic Overdose Mortality in the United States, 1999-2010*. Journal of the American Medical Association Intern Med. 2014;174(10):1668-1673 <http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1898878>