
Controversial Issue of the Cannabis Legalization

Marijuana is mostly looked at as the introduction to more dangerous substances or referred to as the gateway drug. However, the drug does not have as harmful results after use compared to more dangerous drugs such as cocaine. The drug is used for recreational use by adolescents. So much so that the United States has legalized the substance in 28 different states. In 8 of the 28 states marijuana is legalized for recreational use, the other 20 for medicinal use. "German health authorities have allowed seven severely ill patients to buy marijuana at pharmacies for medicinal purposes"(Stafford). Marijuana can help lessen the pain of certain diseases and disorders. "Primary users of medicinal marijuana would be patients with chronic pain, multiple sclerosis, and tourette's syndrome, he said. Also, patients with cancer and HIV who have little appetite could qualify for medicinal marijuana, which in some cases trigger hunger"(Stafford).

Marijuana is used for many different disorders. Cannabis is also a growing market, especially in states California and Oregon. The state's economies have been boosted due to the drug. "Several taxation schemes are presented to offer estimates of revenue if the drug was legalized; these findings suggest that marijuana could contribute modestly to the state's total revenue, but the most economically beneficial aspect of legalization could be from criminal justice savings"(Crawford). The legalization of marijuana created profit. The majority in saving the tax dollars of U.S. citizens by not sentencing marijuana users and sellers to prison. First off, illegal sellers of the drug have the ability to make an alarming amount of profit. Marijuana is a booming market especially in states like California.

Professor Seth S. Crawford of Oregon State University major in environmental sociology stated that Former Wall street journal reporter Gina Chon wrote "The composition of distribution networks suggests that the informal marijuana economy is a 'robust network'"(Crawford). Marijuana when under the government's control can earn an abundant amount of revenue. "The money spent on fighting marijuana could be used better,' Reed says 'if the point of the drug war is harm reduction, then the medical marijuana should be legalized because it has never hurt anyone. Besides, it's obvious we're not winning the war on drugs anyway'"(Chon). The war on marijuana is a waste of resources and a waste of time apprehending a user considering the minimal damage the drug has.

Also, the states that legalize medical marijuana have a greater net increase than those that do not(Crawford). The average marijuana user consumes around 4.5 ounces of marijuana annually. Spending around 177 dollars on one ounce. That means the average smoker spends around 800 dollar a year on marijuana alone. That money could help pay for new roads, and improved bridges. Instead of going to and illegal seller the money could help the community or

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state.

Annually a single grower can make 10,000 dollars for their product(Crawford). Professor Craig Boylstein of Coastal Carolina for chronic illness and medical sociology stated “Previous marijuana research on marijuana growers in the United States has primarily focused on those who have been incarcerated for the activity. These growers tend to produce large amounts of the product”(Craig). The dealers that have been sent to prison for the act had a large amount of profit for their product. “We discovered that the growers all followed a similar pattern of trial and error, learning new techniques from one another to improve their product”(Craig).

Marijuana has the potential to be a stable product. As Professor Kenneth W. Clements of the University of Western Australia stated “Throughout the 1990s, in Australia, the average price of a gram of marijuana was about \$A35, while an ounce cost \$A449. As there are 28 grams in an ounce, this means that the per gram cost of an ounce was $\$449/28 = \16 , or less than half the cost when purchased in the form of gram. There is a substantial discount when buying in bulk”(Clements).

Marijuana can be acquired like any other product. Therefore, the distribution of the product is efficient. Secondly, the recreational use of marijuana is already close to legalization in all states and for a good reason too. Professor Brenda Wells of East Carolina University said “Majority of Americans indicate that they do not want federal resources being used to arrest marijuana smokers”(Wells). Many citizens do not mind the drug and also see it as a waste of money to pursue. Marijuana is not a very big concern to the American people. They would rather use federal resources on harder drugs like cocaine or heroin. In 2012, 18 states legalized marijuana for medicinal use and two for recreational(Wells). In only one year 20 states legalized the drug out of the 28.

As R.C. Knight wrote with several colleagues “Adults about 40 years of age initiated to marijuana prior to 1961, who used it 2 or more times weekly for at least two years”(Knight). Marijuana is commonly used by most American citizens. Helping clarify how accepted the drug is. “It is not surprising that marijuana policy is a serious topic of discussion in Vermont. Vermont has one of the highest rates of marijuana use in the nation, particularly among young adults. Household surveys have found 12 percent of Vermont’s population ages 12 and older- and nearly 30 percent of those are ages 18 to 25”(Caulkins).

Stated by Professor Jonathan P Caulkins of Carnegie Mellon University. It is not just Oregon and California consuming a large amount of marijuana. Overall, Marijuana has a great amount of positive reasons to be legalized. Both recreationally and medically have positives. Proven in Seth Crawford’s journal marijuana helps produce a solid revenue to help boost the economy of the state. Such as in Oregon, 10,000 dollars per dealer was produced in illegal

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revenue(Crawford p). It also brings the tax dollars down due to the reduction in incarceration from marijuana related charges(Boylstein p). Marijuana legalization is a must in order to produce a healthier economy, as well as keeping tax dollars in citizen's pockets.

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