

SAFEGUARD MICHIGAN'S FUTURE

No Need for Recreational Marijuana!



**Unintended Negative Consequences
Recreational Marijuana Will Have Upon Michigan**

**Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan's
(PAAM) Position Paper Opposing Recreational
Marijuana in Michigan**

BACKGROUND

Federal Drug Policy

The United States government regulates the manufacture, distribution, sale, possession and use of drugs under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), Title II of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970. Under the CSA, the Federal Food and Drug Administration created five different drug classifications or schedules. Drugs are placed into their respective schedules based on whether they have a currently accepted medical use for treatment in the U.S., whether there is potential for abuse and whether there is a likelihood for dependence if abused.

Marijuana is classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance. Schedule 1 controlled substances are deemed to have no currently accepted medical use in the U.S., lack accepted safety assurances for use under medical supervision and have a high potential for abuse.

State Drug Policy

Despite being classified as a Schedule 1 drug by the U.S. government 29 states and the District of Columbia have currently enacted Medical Marijuana laws. Michigan passed its Medical Marijuana law in 2008.

Many of its proponents promoted it to the public as necessary for end of life situations, grave illnesses and other situations such as cancer, AIDS and glaucoma. The Michigan public was understandably sympathetic to these issues and despite the well articulated concerns of the medical community that preferable alternatives existed for treatment of these maladies the initiative passed.

What Michigan received was a confusing, contradictory, litigious and poorly written ballot initiative. It has taken years to understand what it means with considerable negative consequences experienced by those on all sides of the issue. This confusion was best summed up in the Michigan Supreme Court case of *People v. Hartwick/Tuttle*, Nos. 148444/148971, decided July 27, 2015. The Court stated “The many inconsistencies in the law have caused confusion for medical marijuana caregivers and patients, law enforcement, attorneys,



and judges, and have consumed valuable public and private resources to interpret and apply it.”

What it has meant for Michigan citizens was reflected in the statistics compiled by the State of Michigan indicating who is obtaining Medical Marijuana Cards and for what purpose. The categories speak for themselves:

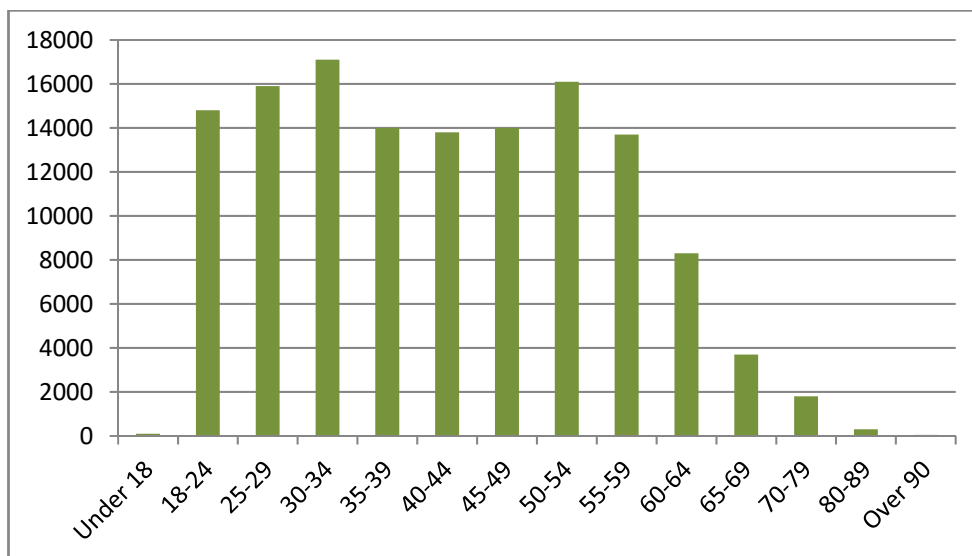
Nature of the debilitating medical conditions of the qualifying medical marijuana patients in Michigan

Name of Debilitating Condition	% of Patients Afflicted With Debilitating Condition (FY13)	% of Patients Afflicted With Debilitating Condition (FY14)	% of Patients Afflicted With Debilitating Condition (FY15)
AIDS	0.26%	0.75%	0.38%
Alzheimer's	0.03%	0.05%	0.05%
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis	0.03%	0.04%	0.04%
Cachexia	0.62%	0.94%	0.83%
Cancer	2.63%	4.04%	4.47%
Crohn's Disease	0.77%	1.06%	1.11%
Glaucoma	1.03%	1.39%	1.45%
Hepatitis C	1.32%	1.74%	1.60%
HIV	0.27%	<i>(now combined with AIDS; see above)</i>	0.40%
Nail Patella	0.02%	0.03%	0.02%
PTSD	n/a	0.38%	2.97%
Seizures - Epilepsy	1.29%	2.05%	2.12%
Severe & Chronic Pain	68.44%	93.70%	92.86%
Severe & Persistent Muscle Spasms	18.71%	25.66%	23.39%
Severe Nausea	7.68%	9.62%	8.95%
Wasting Syndrome	0.62%	0.97%	0.85%

Source: Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs:
<http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-72600-358865-,00.html>

The total adds up to more than 100% because most patients are diagnosed with more than one debilitating medical condition. The tables above show the percentages of all patients diagnosed with each condition.

Age of Registered Qualifying Patients



Michigan now seeks to become the first Midwest State to legalize the recreational use of marijuana.

OVERVIEW

The Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan’s (PAAM) position paper addresses several key areas as to why legalizing recreational marijuana in Michigan is a terrible idea for our State.

It is important for us to learn from the mistakes of legalized recreational marijuana in Colorado. After four years of marijuana legalization the State of Colorado has seen an increase in marijuana related traffic deaths, poison control calls and emergency room visits. The marijuana black market has increased in Colorado. Numerous Colorado marijuana regulators have been indicted for corruption.¹ Below are numerous reasons why PAAM opposes legalizing recreational marijuana in Michigan.

1 Unintended Negative Consequence Number 1: Devastating and Irreparable Impact on Michigan’s Children

“So far, the only thing that the legalization of marijuana has brought to our schools has been marijuana.”¹ Dr. Harry Bull, Superintendent of Cherry Creek Schools, Colorado.²

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Impact the IQ of Michigan’s Youth and Young Adults*
 - A New Zealand study showed that “people who started smoking marijuana heavily in their teens and had an ongoing cannabis use, lost an average of eight IQ points between ages 13 and 38.” These lost mental abilities failed to return to even those who quit using marijuana in their adult years.³

¹ *Marijuana devastated Colorado, don’t legalize it*, August 7, 2017, by Jeff Hunt, Vice President of Public Policy at Colorado Christian University.

² Id.

³ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Marijuana Research Series: What are Marijuana’s Long Term Effects on the Brain?* (April 2015), <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/how-does-marijuana-use-affect-your-brain-body>.



- Comparatively, Colorado teens use marijuana at a rate 50% higher than the national average.⁴
- Since Colorado legalized marijuana, regular use of the drug among children aged 12-17 has been both above the national average and rising faster than the national average.⁵
- Colorado now leads the nation among 12 to 17 year-olds in (A) last-year marijuana use, (B) last-month marijuana use and (C) the percentage of people who try marijuana for the first time during that period.⁶

If marijuana is legalized for the recreational use of adults, it will, similar to alcohol and cigarettes, be much more accessible to children—whether by sneak, parental permission or secondhand smoke. This will result in many youths and young adults losing IQ points before they even complete college. In the long term legalizing recreational marijuana will diminish the performance of promising students who could have been Michigan’s leaders in a variety of categories.

- *Recreational Marijuana Destroys Potential Through Addiction*

- Generally 9% of people who use marijuana become dependent on it.⁷
- 17% of those who start using during teenage years become dependent on marijuana.⁸
- 25%-50% of daily users become dependent upon marijuana.⁹
- Marijuana accounts for 4.2 million of the estimated 6.9 million Americans dependent on or abusing illicit drugs.¹⁰

⁴ Kevin Sabet, *Reefer Sanity: Seven Great Myths About Marijuana* (2013), <http://www.masoncity.net/docview.aspx?Docid=34859>.

⁵ *Lessons Learned After 4 Years of Marijuana Legalization*, October 2016, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), www.learnaboutsam.org

⁶ Id.

⁷ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Is Marijuana Addictive?* (April 2015), <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/marijuana-addictive>.

⁸ Id.

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ Id.



- Students who use marijuana very frequently (more than 25 days a month) during their college experience are twice as likely as minimal users (essentially not using) to discontinue college enrollment.¹¹
- Infrequent marijuana users (using up to 5 days per month) are 66% more likely to drop out than minimal users.¹²

Sharp, focused and successful students are essential to a bright future for Michigan. Due to the destructively addictive effects of marijuana it is obvious that the success of Michigan's students will be negatively impacted by making this harmful substance more recreationally accessible.

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Destroy Michigan's Intellectual Base*

- According to 24/7 Wall St. Michigan has been ranked #2 (Colorado ranked #1) out of the top ten states losing highly educated citizens. In this study, online publication 24/7 Wall St. examined trends concerning educational performance and people with degrees who left Michigan.¹³

In the competitive economic market that Michigan is in, not only nationally but internationally, Michigan cannot afford to lose any more educational ground to the negative effects of marijuana.

2 Unintended Negative Consequence Number 2: Michigan's Health

"We know that patients see their doctor with more symptoms, including cough and wheezing, when they're marijuana smokers." Jeanette Marie Tetrault, MD, FACP, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Yale University School of Medicine.¹⁴

- *Recreational Marijuana Damages a Person's Health*

Compared to nonusers, heavy marijuana users more often report the following:

¹¹ Amelia M. Arria, Kimberly M. Caldeira, Brittany A. Bugbee, Kathryn B. Vincent, *The Academic Opportunity Costs of Substance Abuse During College*, College Park, MD: Center on Young Adult Health and Development (2013).

¹² Id.

¹³ 24/7 Wall Street Journal, *The Ten States Running Out of Smart People*, February 2011, <http://247wallst.com/investing/2011/02/07/the-ten-states-running-out-of-smart-people/#ixzz3cINZHMQB>.

¹⁴ *Is Marijuana Safe?*, WebMD, 2014, by Stephanie Watson.



- Lower life satisfaction; poorer mental health; poorer physical health and more relationship problems.¹⁵

With Michigan finally recouping from its economic downfall the last thing Michigan needs is an increased populous beset by the difficulties delineated above.

- *Recreational Marijuana Damages a Person's Mental Health*

“Several studies have linked marijuana use to increased risk for mental illnesses, including psychosis (schizophrenia), depression and anxiety.”¹⁶

Currently, only about 3% of people experience psychosis.¹⁷ The legalization of recreational marijuana may very well inflate this number. This could result in a significant increase to the \$1,177,100,000 Michigan currently expends upon mental health treatment (2010 total).¹⁸ Acquiescing in and facilitating the opportunity to get high rather than implementing sound mental health policy demonstrates a blatant disregard for the safety of Michigan residents both short and long term.

- *Recreational Marijuana Use by Smoking Damages the Lungs*

The American Lung Association “strongly cautions the public against smoking marijuana.”¹⁹

Compared to tobacco, marijuana smokers inhale more deeply and extendedly. This results in approximately:

- Five times the carbon monoxide concentration, three times the tar and the retention of one-third more tar in the respiratory tract.²⁰

¹⁵ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *How Does Marijuana Affect School, Work, and Social Life?* (April 2015), <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/how-does-marijuana-use-affect-school-work-social-life>.

¹⁶ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Is There a Link Between Marijuana Use and Mental Illness?* (April 2015), <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/there-link-between-marijuana-use-mental-illness>.

¹⁷ National Alliance on Mental Illness, *Psychosis* (2015), <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Related-Conditions/Psychosis>.

¹⁸ Governing the States and Localities, *Mental Health Spending: State Agency Totals* (2015), <http://www.governing.com/gov-data/mental-health-spending-by-state.html>.

¹⁹ American Lung Association, *Marijuana and Drug Health* (March 2015), <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/about-smoking/health-effects/marijuana-lung-health.html>.

²⁰ University of Washington Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, *Respiratory Effects of Marijuana* (June 2013), <http://learnaboutmarijuana.org/factsheets/respiratory-effects.html>.



Regular marijuana use also causes:

- Chronic bronchitis, more lung infections for persons with compromised immune systems and harmful secondhand smoke (contact highs for users' children, etc.).²¹

Before marijuana is deemed to be safe for users more specialized research is needed to determine the true effects of marijuana on both lung and general health.

3 Unintended Negative Consequence Number 3: Michigan's Workplace

"Companies need workers – but people keep getting high." Washington Post Article, May 17, 2017.²²

- *Recreational Marijuana Penalizes a Multitude of Workers*

- Work place drug tests showed that between 2012 and 2013 the "Marijuana positivity rates in Colorado and Washington increased 20 and 23%, respectively,...compared to the 5% average increase among the U.S. general workforce."²³

Employers want attentive, conscientious and productive workers. In furtherance of this objective, they will likely enforce their anti-drug policies in spite of recreational marijuana legalization. The number of people left jobless on account of drug use will increase exponentially. Legalizing recreational marijuana would create significant impediments to the potential success of Michigan's business owners.

- *Recreational Marijuana Penalizes Productive Businesses*

"Marijuana pose[s] a litigation risk to employers. An estimate of the cost of defending an employment practices liability suit is between \$69,000 and

²¹ American Lung Association, *Marijuana and Drug Health* (March 2015), <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/about-smoking/health-effects/marijuana-lung-health.html>.

²² *Companies need workers – but people keep getting high*, Washington Post, May 17, 2017, by Danielle Paquette.

²³ Barry Sample, *Drug Free Work Place in the Age of Marijuana*, 2015, <http://www.riskmanagementmonitor.com/drug-free-workplace-in-the-age-of-marijuana/>.



\$107,000—not including any awards.”²⁴

Additionally, marijuana users are more likely to:

- Be absent; be tardy: make worker compensation claims; turnover jobs.²⁵
- In Michigan, this will increase the risk of businesses failing due to lawsuits and ineffective employees. Such risks will discourage out of state businesses from relocating or establishing businesses in Michigan.
- *Recreational Marijuana Penalizes Innocent Co-Workers*
 - “Marijuana users have 55% more industrial accidents, 85% more injuries and a 75% increase in absenteeism compared to non-smokers.”²⁶
 - Additionally, “Dr. Ewald Horwath, chairman of the psychiatry department at MetroHealth Medical Center, said ‘concerns about marijuana users compromising safety in the workplace are warranted.’” This statement was made in light of a heavy equipment operator’s accidental killing of six co-workers while intoxicated by marijuana.²⁷
 - The CEO of a large Colorado construction company GE Johnson has said that “his company has encountered so many job candidates who have failed pre-employment drug tests because of their THC use that it is actively recruiting construction workers from other states.”²⁸
 - The owner of a Colorado Springs construction company Avalanche Roofing & Exteriors told The New York Times that in Colorado, “to find a roofer or a painter that can pass a drug test is unheard-of.”²⁹
 - The data from major drug testing firm Quest Diagnostics, which analyzes the results of millions of workplace drug tests each year, recently reported a 47% spike in the rate of positive oral marijuana test results in

²⁴ George Millman, *Medical Marijuana Poses Litigation Risks to Employers*, Wall Street Journal, (August 15, 2013).

²⁵ C. Zwerling, Ryan J., and Orav EJ., *The Efficacy of Pre-Employment Drug Screening for Marijuana and Cocaine in Predicting Employment Outcome*, Journal of the American Medical Association 264(20): 2639-2643, (1990).

²⁶ J. N. Gied, *Structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Adolescent Brain*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1021 at 77-85.

²⁷ Olivera Parkins, *Marijuana Legalization: Good or Bad for Ohio Businesses?* (2015), http://Cleveland.com/business/index.ssf/2015/05/marijuana_legalization_good_or_1.html.

²⁸ *Lessons Learned After 4 Years of Marijuana Legalization*, October 2016, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), www.learnaboutsam.org

²⁹ Id.



U.S. workplaces from 2013 to 2015 — and more detailed data shows an incredible 178% rise in that rate from 2011 to 2015.³⁰

- The same study also indicates that after years of declining drug use in the workplace the percentage of employees in the combined U.S. workforce testing positive for drugs has steadily risen over the last three years to reach a 10-year high.³¹

It is clear that marijuana use creates an employee who puts at risk not only herself or himself but all those employees with whom he or she interacts.

4

Unintended Negative Consequence Number 4: Michigan's Roadways

"Currently, one of nine drivers involved in fatal crashes would test positive for marijuana; if this trend continues, in five or six years non-alcohol drugs will overtake alcohol to become the most common substance involved in deaths related to impaired driving." Dr. Guohua Li, director of the Center for Injury Epidemiology and Prevention at Columbia.³²

- *Recreational Marijuana Greatly Endangers the Safety of Drivers*
 - While "Marijuana does cause less dramatic impairment than alcohol intoxication," a test has shown that "it has nonetheless been associated with a 2-3 fold increase in crashes on the road."¹⁵
 - Additionally, Brown University Health Promotion instructs that impairment may last 12 to 24 hours because of marijuana's ability to accumulate in fatty tissue.¹⁶
 - Both Colorado and California experienced 100% increases in marijuana related traffic fatalities after legalizing recreational and medical marijuana respectively.³³
 - Driving while high is increasingly responsible for traffic fatalities in

³⁰ Id.

³¹ Id.

³² *Is Driving While High Dangerous? Fatal Car Accidents Involving Marijuana Triple Over 10 Years*, April 4, 2014, International Business Times, By Philip Ross

³³ Id.



Colorado and Washington since recreational marijuana legalization.³⁴

- The percentage of traffic deaths related to marijuana doubled in Washington State the year retail marijuana sales were allowed. In Colorado, marijuana is now involved in more than one of every five deaths on the road and that number is rising.³⁵

Michigan already suffers numerous fatal crashes at the hands of drunk and drug impaired drivers each year. Should recreational marijuana be legalized Michigan will see an explosion of these tragedies similar to Colorado and Washington.

5 Unintended Consequence Number 5: Black Market Activity in Michigan

“The criminals are still selling on the black market....we have plenty of cartel activity in Colorado (and) plenty of illegal activity that has not decreased at all.” Colorado Attorney General Cynthia Hoffman.³⁶

- *Recreational Marijuana Brings the Black Market Activity to Your Community*
 - A representative of the Colorado Attorney General’s office noted in 2016 that legalization “has inadvertently helped fuel the business of Mexican drug cartels...cartels are now trading drugs like heroin for marijuana and the trade has since opened the door to drug and human trafficking.”³⁷
 - Similarly, the Drug Enforcement Administration reported that “since 2014, there has been a noticeable increase in organized networks of sophisticated residential [marijuana] grows in Colorado that are orchestrated and operated by drug trafficking organizations.”³⁸ The mayor of Colorado Springs, John Suthers, agreed, stating that “Mexican

³⁴ Id.

³⁵ Id.

³⁶ Id.

³⁷ Id.

³⁸ Id.



cartels are no longer sending marijuana into Colorado, they're now growing it in Colorado and sending it back to Mexico and every place else," hiding in plain sight among legal operations.³⁹

OTHER UNINTENDED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

- Recreational Marijuana Falls Way Short of the Promised Revenue:

In fiscal year 2016, marijuana tax revenue in Colorado generated \$156,701,018. The total tax revenue for Colorado was \$13,327,123,798, making marijuana only 1.18% of the state's total tax revenue.⁴⁰ The cost of recreational marijuana in Michigan in public awareness campaigns, law enforcement, healthcare treatment, addiction recovery and preventative work is an unknown but obviously substantial cost.

- Recreational Marijuana Will Cause a Rise in the Homeless Population:

While overall U.S. homelessness decreased between 2013 and 2014, as the country moved out of the recession, Colorado was one of 17 states that saw homeless numbers increase during that time.⁴¹

In the Denver metropolitan area, where over half of the state's homeless live, shelter usage grew by about 50 percent, from around 28,000 accommodations per month in July 2012 to 42,000 per month in November 2015.⁴²

A shelter for younger people placed that number even higher, with a spokesman indicating that "at least one in three [residents] said they were here in Denver because of the legalization of marijuana ... [t]hat has become our new normal."⁴³

³⁹ Id.

⁴⁰ *Marijuana devastated Colorado, don't legalize it*, August 7, 2017, by Jeff Hunt, Vice President of Public Policy at Colorado Christian University.

⁴¹ *Lessons Learned After 4 Years of Marijuana Legalization*, October 2016, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), www.learnaboutsam.org. See also, Warner, Joel. *Marijuana Legalization in Colorado: How Recreational Weed Is Attracting People, But Spiking the State's Homeless Rate*, International Business Times. 20 June 2016. Web. 21 Oct. 2016.

⁴² Id.

⁴³ Id.



- *Recreational Marijuana Will Cause a Spike in Poison Control Center Calls and Hospital/ER Visits:*

Calls to poison control in Washington State surged 68 percent from 2012 (pre-legalization) to 2015 and 109 percent in Colorado over the same timeframe.⁴⁴

Calls in Colorado related to children zero to eight years of age rose over 200 percent.⁴⁵

Out-of-state visits to the emergency room for marijuana-related symptoms accounted for 78 of every 10,000 emergency room visits in 2012, compared to 163 for every 10,000 visits in 2014—an increase of 109 percent.⁴⁶

Among Colorado residents, the number of marijuana-related visits was 70 for every 10,000 in 2012 compared to 101 for every 10,000 in 2014 a 44 percent increase.⁴⁷

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Cause an Increase in Treatment*

In 2007, 22% of people in treatment in Colorado reported using the drug heavily. That number has increased every year since and now 36% of people in treatment for marijuana are heavy marijuana users.⁴⁸

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Be More Potent than Ever Before*

Edibles, which now comprise at least half of the Colorado marijuana market, often contain 3-20 times the THC concentration recommended for intoxication.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Kim, Howard S. et al. *Marijuana Tourism and Emergency Department Visits in Colorado*, New England Journal of Medicine 374.8 (2016): 797798. Web. 21 Oct. 2016. Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, as analyzed and reported in Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics. *Marijuana Legalization in Colorado: Early Findings*. Mar. 2016. Web. 21 Oct 2016.

⁴⁵ Id.

⁴⁶ Id.

⁴⁷ Id.

⁴⁸ Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health, Drug/Alcohol Coordinated Data System, as analyzed and reported in Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics, *Marijuana Legalization in Colorado: Early Findings*, Denver, Mar. 2016. Web. 21 Oct 2016.

⁴⁹ *Update: Symbol for Colorado Edibles Gets a Tweak, Stop Sign Nixed*, The Cannabist, 2016. Web. 21 Oct 2016.



There have been at least three deaths related to marijuana edibles through 2015.⁵⁰

While Colorado is looking at how to control this industry, the marijuana industry defends gummies, cupcakes, lollipops, and sodas—similar to how Big Tobacco defended their practices for a century.⁵¹

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Cause an Increase in Crime*

Drug and narcotics crime in Denver has increased at about 11% per year since marijuana legalization. While it is unclear if legalization has caused this increase it does contradict promises of pro-legalization advocates that legalization would reduce such crime rates.⁵²

Denver's overall crime rate has risen, as well as rates of serious crimes like murder, motor vehicle theft, aggravated assault and burglaries.⁵³

Many marijuana-related offenses, such as public marijuana consumption, have also increased as use has trended upward.⁵⁴

Among juveniles, trends suggest that marijuana legalization is associated with a higher incidence of marijuana related offenses in elementary and high schools. More juveniles on probation are testing positive for marijuana than ever before. The rate has increased from 28% to 39% among the youngest segment (10-14 year olds) in just three years.⁵⁵

- *Recreational Marijuana Will Cause an Increase in Butane Hash Oil Explosions*

Over the past few years, use and manufacturing of Butane Hash Oil (BHO) has skyrocketed. This poses a significant threat to street officers and narcotics

⁵⁰ Id.

⁵¹ Id.

⁵² Denver Police Department, Crime Statistics and Maps. 2016. Web. 23 Oct 2016.

⁵³ *Lessons Learned After 4 Years of Marijuana Legalization*, October 2016, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), www.learnaboutsam.org.

⁵⁴ Id.

⁵⁵ Id.



officers who are the first to respond to these explosions.⁵⁶

BHO, depending on who is manufacturing it, has around 75 percent to 90 percent THC. With such high THC levels many users are reporting that they are experiencing a psychedelic effect while under the influence.⁵⁷

At approximately 800 degrees butane will ignite. This can come from a refrigerator motor, static electricity, a TASER or gunfire. If the butane ignites an explosion can occur immediately and fire can engulf people nearby including law enforcement personnel.⁵⁸

In Michigan, there have been BHO explosions in various locations in the State including Muskegon and Wexford Counties.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

Looking at the above mentioned facts, legalizing recreational marijuana is a terrible idea for Michigan.

In protecting the interests of Michigan citizens, Michigan's best plan of action is to (1) research the effects of recreational marijuana and (2) educate the public on the effects of recreational marijuana.

1

Michigan should invest in researching the effects recreational marijuana will have on our State.

Research is needed on both the consequences of legalization and the economic costs of such a policy, such as:

- Emergency room and hospital admissions related to marijuana
- Marijuana potency and price trends in the legal and illegal markets
- Extent of marijuana advertising toward youth and its impact
- Mental health effects of marijuana
- Marijuana-related car crashes

⁵⁶ *Butane Hash Oil (BHO): An explosive threat to officers*, October 8, 2014, By Keith Graves, PoliceOne.com.

⁵⁷ Id.

⁵⁸ Id.



- School incidents related to marijuana, including representative data
- Marijuana intervention and treatment admissions
- Cost of implementing legalization from law enforcement to regulators
- Cost of mental health and addiction treatment related to increased marijuana use
- Cost of needing but not receiving treatment
- Effect on the market for alcohol and other drugs
- Cost to workplace and employers
- Impact on employee productivity

At this stage in the recreational marijuana debate the research is still evolving. However, competent and reliable research strongly indicates that marijuana is detrimental to education, health, business and law enforcement. Comparatively, marijuana's benefits seem marginal. The only plausible benefit is that of possible tax revenues from legalizing the drug. This initial benefit will be obliterated by the long term costs of failed education, inflation of both mentally and physically ill patients, extraordinarily negative business impact and costly enforcement complications.

2

In addition to researching the effects of recreational marijuana, Michigan should educate the public on the effects of recreational marijuana. If the public is introduced to the severe effects that marijuana has on education, health, business and law enforcement, many would surely decide against its legalization.

As Michigan considers the prospect of recreational marijuana, we should remember Michigan was fooled once with the empty and misleading promises of medical marijuana.

A thorough and complete review of all the dynamics associated with the potential legalization of recreational marijuana use in Michigan clearly establishes that such a step would not be in the best interests of this State nor its citizens.

For the reasons articulated above, PAAM is strongly against legalizing recreational marijuana in the State of Michigan.

