

Citizens Against Legalizing Marijuana

Stop Pot 2016

CALMca.org

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FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) **Regarding Marijuana Legalization**

- **Isn't medical marijuana already legal in California?** In 1996, California voters approved Prop 215 to provide for an affirmative defense for those who felt they needed marijuana for a serious illness. The voters did not vote to legalize medical marijuana or allow for stores and delivery businesses. Subsequent bills have provided essentially back-door legalization which has dramatically increased use and drug dealing in California.
- **Why are stores allowed to openly sell marijuana against federal law?** Some federal enforcement continues against cultivation and distribution but it is not consistent. The current administration has deemphasized enforcement in states that have "medical" marijuana laws or where full legalization has occurred. Consequently, we have created a lawless marijuana drug industry. The state will not be able to regulate this criminal activity. Enforcement is required.
- **Has the FDA approved marijuana as a medicine?** There are some FDA approved drugs such as Marinol that have been tested and found effective for some specific conditions. However, after years of testing, raw marijuana continues to prove to have negative impacts that outweigh any benefits. CALM supports properly used FDA approved drugs of all kinds.
- **Why shouldn't marijuana be legalized?** Marijuana is a dangerous, psychoactive, addictive drug that impacts the brain. The marijuana of today is 15-40 times stronger than the marijuana of the 1960's. Its use impairs judgment and perception and makes driving and operating machinery more dangerous. The brain isn't fully developed until about age 25, and marijuana impacts brain development. Alarmingly, the vast majority of marijuana users are young adults and teens. Marijuana use increases the risk of psychosis, schizophrenia, depression, thoughts of suicide.
- **What has happened in other states that have legalized marijuana?** Teen use has increased. Colorado now leads the nation in teen use. Traffic fatalities associated with marijuana have doubled in states that have legalized. Homelessness and other social ills have become worse.
- **Isn't marijuana safer than cigarettes?** No. Marijuana smoke has nearly all the same carcinogens as cigarette smoke and is just as addictive. Marijuana smoke has 20 times more ammonia than tobacco smoke and marijuana users typically breathe the smoke deeper. And, marijuana impairs judgment and perception, making driving under the influence very dangerous.
- **Marijuana hasn't killed anyone. What is the harm?** The negative impact on individuals and particularly teens is significant. Many violent psychotic acts have been committed by regular marijuana smokers such as Jared Loughner (shooter of Gabby Giffords, killed 6, injured 13), James Holmes (Colorado theater shooter killed 12 injured 70) and the Tsarnaev brothers (Boston bombers). Children of marijuana users also suffer neglect. And, each day approximately 125 Americans die of an overdose of drugs. Virtually all used, or are still using marijuana when they overdose. Marijuana is a gateway drug.
- **Isn't marijuana safer than alcohol?** No. Over 60% of American adults drink alcohol regularly. Only about 10% drink to get drunk. Less than 10% of Americans use marijuana and virtually all use it to get high. However, when marijuana and alcohol or other drugs are used together (cross fading), the impairment from the marijuana is much greater.
- **Won't the black market go away if we legalize marijuana?** No. In Colorado about 40% of the marijuana being sold is black market marijuana. Drug cartels don't go away; they move into other businesses such as heroin and human trafficking. And, California currently produces about 60% of all the marijuana in America, making California the largest "drug cartel".