

Arizona Sample Op Ed

Proposition 203: A Losing Proposition for Arizona

On November 2, 2010, Arizona voters will have the opportunity to vote on the Arizona Medical Marijuana Initiative, known as Proposition 203. They should vote **NO**. The initiative would remove all criminal and civil penalties and effectively legalize “medical” marijuana for “patients” and “caregivers.” This ballot initiative undermines prevention efforts throughout the state and puts the public safety, health and academic achievement of Arizona’s youth at risk.

Let’s face it, marijuana is not medicine. Leading experts from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) agree that smoked marijuana has no currently accepted medical value. The 1999 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report states “We see little future in smoked marijuana as a medicine.” Smoked marijuana as medicine has been rejected by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the American Glaucoma Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Cancer Society.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most prevalent illegal drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 8 percent of nighttime and weekend drivers tested positive for marijuana. Currently, drugs are used by approximately 10 to 22 percent of drivers involved in crashes, and cause \$33 billion in damages every year. Proposition 203 would only exacerbate this problem.

And, we know from research that the more kids believe a drug is not dangerous, the more they will try it. If Proposition 203 passes, we will undoubtedly see a dramatic increase in the number youth using marijuana. In fact, national studies have already shown that more kids are smoking marijuana than cigarettes, because they view smoking cigarettes as more harmful than smoking pot. Those states that have already legalized marijuana for “medicinal” purposes are seeing the effects: they have among the highest addiction rates in the nation and rank at the bottom of the nation as far as 12-17 year olds thinking that smoking marijuana is harmful. Therefore, it stands to reason that if “medical” marijuana is actually legalized in Arizona, youth will see it as even less dangerous than they do now and even more kids will use it.

Research shows that marijuana use among adolescents impacts brain development and academic achievement. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that youth with an average grade of D or below were more than four times as likely to have used marijuana in the past year than youth with an average grade of A. Proposition 203 would reduce the educational outcomes of Arizona students.

This is NOT what our state needs! Vote **NO** to Proposition 203.

Proposition 19: A Losing Proposition for California

On November 2, 2010, California voters will have the opportunity to vote on Proposition 19, also known as the “Regulate, Control and Tax Cannabis Act of 2010.” They should vote **NO**. The initiative would allow persons over 21 to possess up to one ounce of marijuana for personal use; allow the use of marijuana in non-public places, such as a residence, or at public establishments licensed for on site marijuana consumption; and allow individuals to grow marijuana for personal use. This ballot initiative undermines prevention efforts throughout the state and puts the public safety, health and academic achievement of California’s kids at risk. In fact, according to the 2008 Monitoring the Future Survey, 51.5 percent of 12th graders cited a fear of being arrested as one of their main reasons for not using marijuana, and Proposition 19 would virtually eliminate this barrier.

Marijuana already costs the United States \$181 billion annually in increased health care costs, crime and lost productivity. So any revenue gained by taxing marijuana would be far outweighed by the healthcare and criminal justice costs to the state.

Drugs are used by approximately 10 to 22 percent of drivers involved in crashes, and cause \$33 billion in damages every year. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most prevalent illegal drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 8 percent of nighttime and weekend drivers tested positive for marijuana. Proposition 19 would only exacerbate this problem.

And, we know from research that the more kids believe a drug is not dangerous, the more they will try it so if marijuana is legalized, we will undoubtedly see a dramatic increase in the number of California youth using marijuana. National studies have already shown that more kids are smoking marijuana than cigarettes, because they view smoking cigarettes as more harmful than smoking pot. Therefore, it stands to reason that if marijuana is actually legalized for personal use in California, youth will see it as even less dangerous than they do now and even more kids will use it.

Research shows that marijuana use among adolescents impacts brain development and academic achievement. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that youth with an average grade of D or below were more than four times as likely to have used marijuana in the past year than youth with an average grade of A. Proposition 19 would exacerbate this problem and reduce the educational outcomes of California’s students.

So, vote **NO** on Prop 19; it is a losing proposition all around for California.

Measure 74: A Losing Measure for Oregon

On November 2, 2010, Oregon voters will have the opportunity to vote on the Regulated Medical Marijuana Supply System Act, Measure 74 (temporarily titled as Initiative 28). They should vote **NO**. The initiative would create a system that would allow farmers to grow and distribute marijuana crops to “medical” marijuana dispensaries in the state. It would also allow the establishment of privately owned, non-profit dispensaries. Ballot initiatives such as this give the false impression that marijuana is a benign drug.

This proposed measure would negatively affect the quality of life in the neighborhoods in which the dispensaries operate due to increases in crime. Consider the following examples from other states that have “medical” marijuana laws in place. Los Angeles police reported that robberies at or near “medical” marijuana facilities had doubled since passage of California's Compassionate Use Act in 1996. Between January 2006 and February 2007, San Francisco saw 57 robberies, 77 attempted robberies and 198 burglaries as “medical” marijuana dispensaries, according to the report. Since 2000, more than 700 dispensaries in Colorado have been licensed and have overwhelmed regulatory and law enforcement agencies. A survey by the Colorado Drug Investigator's Association reported that “medical” marijuana dispensaries in Colorado attract or cause numerous ancillary social problems as byproducts of their operation including: armed robberies, murders, burglaries, money laundering and decreased quality of life in neighborhoods near dispensaries.

Drugs are used by approximately 10 to 22 percent of drivers involved in crashes, and cause \$33 billion in damages every year. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most prevalent illegal drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 8 percent of nighttime and weekend drivers tested positive for marijuana. Measure 74 would only exacerbate this problem.

“Medical” marijuana is legal in Oregon, and it became legal through the ballot initiative process. Since that time, the number of marijuana users in the state has increased. In fact, according to the State Estimates of Substance Use from the 2005-2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Oregon ranks 11th in terms of states with the highest past 30 day usage rates among youth, and is the 9th in terms of new initiates. Let's not compound this problem by sanctioning the establishment of dispensaries and allowing farmers to grow and distribute marijuana to them. This will only lead to an increase in crime, and further compromise our public safety.

Legalizing the use and cultivation of “medicinal” marijuana ignores public safety issues and will have a deleterious effect on Oregon's youth and communities. Vote **NO** to the Regulated Medical Marijuana Supply System Act, Measure 74.

South Dakota Sample Op Ed

Measure 13: A Losing Measure for South Dakota

On November 2, 2010, Arizona voters will have the opportunity to vote on the Regulated Medical Marijuana Supply System Act, known as Measure 13. They should vote **NO**. The initiative would remove all criminal and civil penalties and effectively legalize “medical” marijuana for “patients” and “caregivers.” This ballot initiative undermines the prevention efforts throughout the state and puts the public safety, health and academic achievement of South Dakota’s kids at risk.

Let’s face it, marijuana is not medicine. Leading experts from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) agree that smoked marijuana has no currently accepted medical value. The 1999 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report states “We see little future in smoked marijuana as a medicine.” Smoked marijuana as medicine has been rejected by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the American Glaucoma Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Cancer Society.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most prevalent illegal drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 8 percent of nighttime and weekend drivers tested positive for marijuana. Currently, drugs are used by approximately 10 to 22 percent of drivers involved in crashes, and causes \$33 billion in damages every year. Measure 13 would only exacerbate this problem.

And, we know from research that the more kids believe a drug is not dangerous, the more they will try it so if “medical” marijuana is legalized, we will undoubtedly see a dramatic increase in the number youth using marijuana. In fact, national studies have already shown that more kids are smoking marijuana than cigarettes, because they view smoking cigarettes as more harmful than smoking pot. Therefore, it stands to reason that if “medical” marijuana is actually legalized in South Dakota, youth will see it as even less dangerous than they do now and even more kids will use it.

Research shows that marijuana use among adolescents impacts brain development and academic achievement. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that youth with an average grade of D or below were more than four times as likely to have used marijuana in the past year than youth with an average grade of A. Measure 13 would reduce the educational outcomes of South Dakota’s students.

The easier South Dakota makes smoking marijuana, the more people are going to use it, resulting in more marijuana-related problems and costs in South Dakota. So, vote **NO** on Measure 13.

Sample Resolution

How To Get A Resolution Introduced

- 1) Identify your strongest ally on your city council and contact his/her office to set up a meeting to discuss the possibility of him/her introducing a resolution in opposition of Proposition [INSERT NAME/NUMBER OF PROPOSITION/MEASURE]
- 2) Designate a primary speaker (during the meeting only spend one minute on introductions) – give a brief background on your coalition and what you do
- 3) During the meeting, **provide the city council member with any local statistics, let him/her know that there is widespread support within the community for this resolution**, and tell the member that:
 - Marijuana is the most widely abused illicit drug in the nation among both youth and adults
 - Treatment rates for marijuana addiction have skyrocketed in recent years
 - Using marijuana at a young age can have harmful effects on youth: The younger the age a person first uses drugs, the higher their chance of adult drug dependency and addiction
 - According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most prevalent illegal drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims.
- 4) Bring documents to leave behind, including:
 - A one-pager on your coalition
 - A copy of the draft resolution
- 5) Ask the city council member if he/she would consider introducing the resolution in opposition of Proposition [INSERT NAME/NUMBER OF PROPOSITION/MEASURE].
- 6) Let CADCA know how the meeting goes, whether or not your city council member agreed to introduce the resolution, and if it passes

Sample Resolution in Opposition to Proposition [INSERT NAME/NUMBER OF PROPOSITION/MEASURE]

Whereas the 1999 Institute of Medicine Report stated that “because of the health risks associated with smoking, smoking marijuana should generally not be recommended for long-term medicinal use . . . we see little future in smoked marijuana as a medicine”;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration has a rigorous process in place that requires scientific criteria and standards to be met before medications can be provided to patients;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration has rejected the use of smoked marijuana as medicine;

Whereas the American Cancer Society, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the American Glaucoma Society, and the American Academy of Ophthalmology have all rejected the use of smoked marijuana as medicine;

Whereas addiction is a complex developmental disorder influenced by a number of factors, including genetics, environment, and age of first use that begins in adolescence, sometimes as early as childhood, for which effective prevention is critical;

Whereas according to studies by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the younger a person first uses drugs or alcohol, the greater the likelihood that they will become dependent and/or addicted to drugs and alcohol as an adult;

Whereas youth who first smoke marijuana under the age of 14 are more than five times as likely to abuse drugs in adulthood;

Whereas research demonstrates that illegal drug, alcohol and tobacco use among youth declines as the perception of risk and social disapproval increases;

Whereas the most recent Monitoring the Future survey data shows that 8th and 10th graders have the perception that the occasional and regular use of marijuana is less dangerous than previous cohorts;

Whereas the 2009 Pride National Survey shows rising marijuana use by students in grades 6, 7 and 8, and rising overall drug use by students in grades 9 through 12;

Whereas the 2009 Monitoring the Future Survey shows that past 30 day use of marijuana has already eclipsed that of tobacco among 10th and 12th graders and is equal among 8th graders;

Whereas states that have legalized marijuana have the highest past 30 day marijuana usage rates and lowest perceptions of harm among youth in the country;

Whereas youth substance use precedes, and is a risk factor for, academic problems, such as lower grades, absenteeism and high dropout rates;

Whereas poor performance in school has been associated with marijuana use, as youth with an average grade of D or below were more than four times as likely to have used marijuana in the past year than youth with an average grade of A;

Whereas students who use marijuana before the age of 15 are three times more likely to have left school by age 16 and two times more likely to report frequent truancy;

Whereas youth who engage in fighting or other delinquent behaviors were more likely than other youth to have used illicit drugs;

Whereas on average, students whose peers avoided substance use had test scores (measured by the Washington state math and reading standards) that were 18 points higher for reading, and 45 points higher for math;

Whereas Proposition [INSERT NAME/NUMBER OF PROPOSITION/MEASURE], will appear on the November, 2010 ballot initiative;

Whereas legalizing marijuana ignores substance abuse prevention, public safety, the Food and Drug Administration's rigorous process for approving medications, and compromises the well being of our youth: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the X City Council-

- a. opposes Proposition [INSERT NAME/NUMBER OF PROPOSITION/MEASURE].