

Recreational Use



It's time to stop arresting responsible marijuana smokers. Millions of Americans use marijuana; few abuse it. Arresting these otherwise law-abiding citizens serves no legitimate purpose; extends government into inappropriate areas of our private lives; and causes enormous harm to the lives, careers and families of the more than 500,000 marijuana smokers arrested each year in this country.

Marijuana smokers are no different from their non-smoking peers, except for their marijuana use. Like most Americans, they are responsible citizens who work hard, raise families, contribute to their communities, and want a safe, crime-free neighborhood in which to live. They are not part of the crime problem and should not be treated like criminals.

Responsible marijuana use causes no harm to society and should be of no interest to state and federal

governments. Today, far more harm is caused by marijuana prohibition than by the use of marijuana itself.

DECRIMINALIZATION

NORML supports the removal of all penalties for the private possession of marijuana by adults, cultivation for personal use, and the casual non-profit transfers of small amounts. NORML also supports the development of a legally controlled market for marijuana.

HARM REDUCTION

All drugs, including marijuana, can be abused. Our marijuana policies should discourage irresponsible use, including use by adolescents.

The best way to prevent drug abuse is with honest, credible and factual drug education. Only in a climate in which marijuana is viewed from a public health perspective,

instead of a criminal justice perspective, can prevention efforts be effective.

REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS

As with alcohol consumption, marijuana smoking should be limited to adults. Driving or operating heavy machinery after smoking marijuana should be prohibited. NORML's "Principles of Responsible Cannabis Use" defines acceptable conduct (available upon request).

"Penalties against drug use should not be more damaging to an individual than use of the drug itself. Nowhere is this more clear than in the laws against possession of marijuana in private for personal use."

President Jimmy Carter, August 2, 1977

Medical Marijuana



Marijuana prohibition applies to every one, including the sick and dying. Of all the negative consequences of prohibition, none is as tragic as the denial of medicinal marijuana to the tens of thousands of seriously ill patients who could benefit from its use. This includes cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, AIDS patients suffering from "wasting syndrome," glaucoma patients, and those suffering from chronic pain, rheumatoid arthritis and a variety of spastic conditions such as multiple sclerosis, paraplegia, quadriplegia, and epilepsy. Marijuana should be immediately made available by prescription to seriously ill patients.

NORML first raised this issue in 1972 in an adminis-

trative petition asking that marijuana be rescheduled so it could be prescribed as a medicine. After 16 years of legal battles and appeals, the Drug Enforcement Administration's Chief Administrative Law Judge Francis Young found: "Marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man. . . . Marijuana has been accepted as capable of relieving distress of great numbers of very ill people, and doing so with safety under medical supervision. It would be unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious for DEA to continue to stand between those sufferers and the benefits of this substance in light of the evidence in this record." Judge Young further recommended that marijuana be made available as a legal medicine. The DEA Administrator overruled Judge

Young, and the Court of Appeals allowed that decision to stand, denying medical marijuana to seriously ill patients. Much of NORML's efforts focus on lobbying both state legislators and Congress to correct this injustice.

"Marijuana should be available to all patients who need it to help them undergo treatment for life threatening illnesses. As long as therapy is safe and has not been proven ineffective, seriously ill patients (and their physicians) should have access to whatever they need to fight for their lives."

The New England Journal of Medicine, August 7, 1997

Industrial Hemp



Hemp refers to the non-psychoactive strain of marijuana grown by farmers throughout the world for industrial purposes. Hemp is one of nature's strongest and most versatile agricultural crops and has many commercial uses. Various parts of the plant may be utilized for making paper, textiles, cosmetics, paints, clothing, foodstuffs, insulation, and animal feed. It produces a much higher yield per acre

than substitutes such as wood pulp and cotton and requires virtually no pesticides. Farmers in 30 countries—including Canada, France, England, Germany, Japan, and Australia—grow hemp for industrial purposes. Presently, federal and state laws prohibit American farmers from growing this profitable and environmentally friendly commodity. NORML lobbies state and federal legislators to recognize hemp as a legitimate economic crop.

"The marketplace, not myopic rules, should determine hemp's future in America."

The New York Times, April 11, 1998

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— NORML MISSION STATEMENT —

NORML's mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

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— FOUNDATION MISSION STATEMENT —

The NORML Foundation's mission is to educate the public about the costs of marijuana prohibition and the benefits of alternative policies, to undertake research into various aspects of marijuana and marijuana policy implications, and to provide legal support and assistance to victims of the current laws.

The

NORML

Organization

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has been a voice for Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition. NORML is the oldest and largest national organization dedicated solely to reforming marijuana laws.

A nonprofit public-interest lobby based in Washington, DC, NORML works closely with Congress, federal agencies and the national media to reform current policy. NORML publishes a regular newsletter, issues special reports, and distributes a weekly press advisory to the media. Working with approximately 60 state and local affiliates, we also lobby state legislatures and support state level voter initiatives. NORML also hosts a popular site on the Internet (www.norml.org) where visitors can inform themselves about the issue and send a free fax to Congress.

NORML's board of directors includes nationally respected physicians, researchers, scientific authorities, political activists and criminal defense attorneys. NORML also maintains a legal committee comprised of some of the nation's best marijuana defense lawyers, who regularly defend individuals charged with marijuana offenses, and frequently provide *pro bono* assistance in cases that may set important legal precedent or otherwise impact public policy.

NORML's sister organization, The NORML Foundation, is a nonprofit educational, research and legal foundation. The Foundation educates the public about the costs of and alternatives to marijuana prohibition, and provides legal support and assistance to victims of the current marijuana laws. Contributions to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

NORML Needs Your Support!

The single most important step you can take to end marijuana prohibition is to join NORML and help us in this fight. It's time to put to rest the myth that marijuana smoking is a fringe or deviant activity. In reality, marijuana smoking is extremely common, and marijuana is the recreational drug of choice for millions of hard-working, middle class Americans.

Join with us to build a mainstream political constituency that our elected officials can no longer ignore. Let's send a strong message that it is time to stop arresting marijuana smokers.

NORML publications and updates will keep you apprised of the latest developments in the field and on Capitol Hill, and alert you when a vote is scheduled and the need is crucial for a letter to your state or federal elected officials. And you'll be informed of national and regional NORML meetings where you can meet other reform advocates and help shape reform efforts around the country.

If you want to stop arresting marijuana smokers, the most valuable thing you can do is join NORML!

YES! Sign me up as a NORML member. I want to stop the war against marijuana smokers.

Annual Membership (please select one)

- Lifetime: \$2,500 Sustaining: \$250
 Committee of 1,000: \$1,000 Dedicated: \$100*
 Director's Club: \$500 Regular: \$25

*Contributions or Annual Pledges of \$100 or more receive all NORML publications, including weekly fax/e-mail press advisory.

Monthly Pledge Program

- Bill my credit card _____/month (minimum pledge: \$15/month)
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...working to reform
marijuana laws...

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