



"Measure 80 . . . bad idea!"

Imagine Oregon as a magnet that attracts the illicit drug trade for the entire North American continent. Is that what we want to incubate as one of Oregon's prime industries?

As protectors of public safety, members of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association, Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police, Oregon Narcotics Enforcement Association, and Oregon District Attorneys Association see only problems associated with Measure 80, (called the Oregon Cannabis Tax Act), which would outright legalize cannabis/marijuana and hemp, which are both federally illegal. Measure 80 threatens communities already beset by drug abuse and narcotics trafficking. Simply put, Measure 80 will undermine public health and public safety in Oregon.

First, Measure 80 would put Oregon out of compliance with the federal Drug Free Workplace Act, according to research done by the California Chambers of Commerce. Compliance with

that act is required for federal funding. Oregon could lose millions annually in federal aid and grants affecting schools, businesses and government contracts.

Second, Measure 80 seeks total state government control, and would be uniform throughout the state, superseding all state statutes, municipal charter enactments, and local ordinances relating to marijuana/cannabis.

Measure 80 would also permit the forming of a new seven member state agency designed to cultivate and sell marijuana in government operated stores throughout Oregon, with five of those seven members being elected solely by marijuana growers and processors, and the other two appointed by the Governor. Measure 80 leaves all of the rules and regulations of the manufacturing and selling of marijuana to this newly formed seven member State Agency. It also notes that the current so-called Oregon Medical Marijuana Program will remain untouched, allowing cardholders in the program (with a doctor's recommendation) the right to

grow six mature marijuana plants and 18 immature marijuana plants. This begs the question, if everyone over 21 can legally buy marijuana with Measure 80, why would there even be a need for a so-called medical marijuana program, if not for the continuation of shady cardholders, caregivers, and growers being able to hide under the current unregulated and unmonitored Oregon Medical Marijuana Program which has created a nightmare of problems for law enforcement with out-of-compliance overgrows and thousands of pounds of marijuana being diverted to other states for illegal sales.

Measure 80 also permits businesses that bar minor's entry, to sell marijuana and also permits the public consumption of marijuana in non-minor areas where prominent signs allow it. This creates a state and a workplace where any driver over the age of 21 can get on the road with marijuana in their system. "Drugged driving" incidents are on the rise, and this measure does not establish standards for driving under the influence of marijuana. Law enforcement

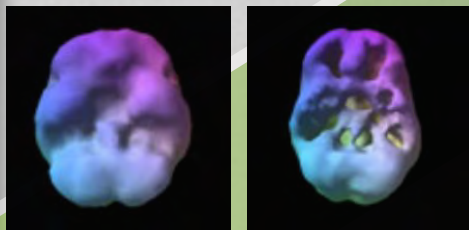
will have very little recourse to keep those impaired drivers off the road. Transit drivers and everyday commuters will be able to drive while under the influence of marijuana. That fact alone should be enough to oppose this measure.

Marijuana use adversely affects a person's concentration, coordination, and perception, all important skills for safe driving.

- In 2009, 28% of all fatally injured drivers tested positive for marijuana use.¹
- Last year in Colorado, over 50 people were killed because of marijuana-impaired drivers.²
- A study of 182 truck accidents causing death found 12.8% of the drivers were under influence of marijuana.³

Do Oregon citizens want more impaired drivers on our interstates and roadways? We don't believe so.

Third, studies have shown that expanded availability and perceived social acceptance will increase marijuana use among youth. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC-the main active ingredient in marijuana) impairs the development of the adolescent brain.



16 year old-underside surface of the brain with 2 years of daily marijuana use.⁴

Oregon currently has the nation's third highest rate of marijuana use among youth, ages 12 – 17.⁵

The percentage of kids in drug counseling for marijuana addiction has been increasing annually, and the resulting negative effects place both our youth's development and our future workforce at risk. With Measure 80, increased availability and use by youth will increase addiction. With Measure 80 our public schools will be required to educate our children and grandchildren on how to use marijuana responsibly. This certainly is not a function of our public schools.

Research has shown that marijuana's adverse impact on learning and memory can last for days or weeks after the acute effects of the drug wear off. Marijuana contains approximately triple the amount of tar found in cigarette smoke and marijuana smoke contains 50–70 percent more carcinogenic hydrocarbons than does tobacco smoke. THC, which is found in marijuana, affects the immune system which can cause many body malfunctions. Studies have shown that there is increased risk of difficulty with narrow logical development in babies born to mothers who smoked marijuana during their pregnancy.

Long-term marijuana abuse can lead to addiction; that is, compulsive drug seeking and abuse despite its known harmful effects upon social functioning in the context of family, school, work, and recreational activities.⁶

The 1998 MTF survey shows that marijuana continues to be the illegal drug most frequently used by young people. Among high school seniors, 49.1 percent reported using marijuana at least once in their lives, a decrease of one-half of a percentage point from 1997. By comparison, the figure was 44.9 percent for high school seniors in 1996 and 41.7 percent in 1995. Current use of marijuana by 10th graders declined from 34.8 percent to 31.1 percent. There was

evidence of a reduction in the rate of increase of current use among 8th and 12th graders.⁷

Public safety will suffer, and the quality of life in our communities will deteriorate.

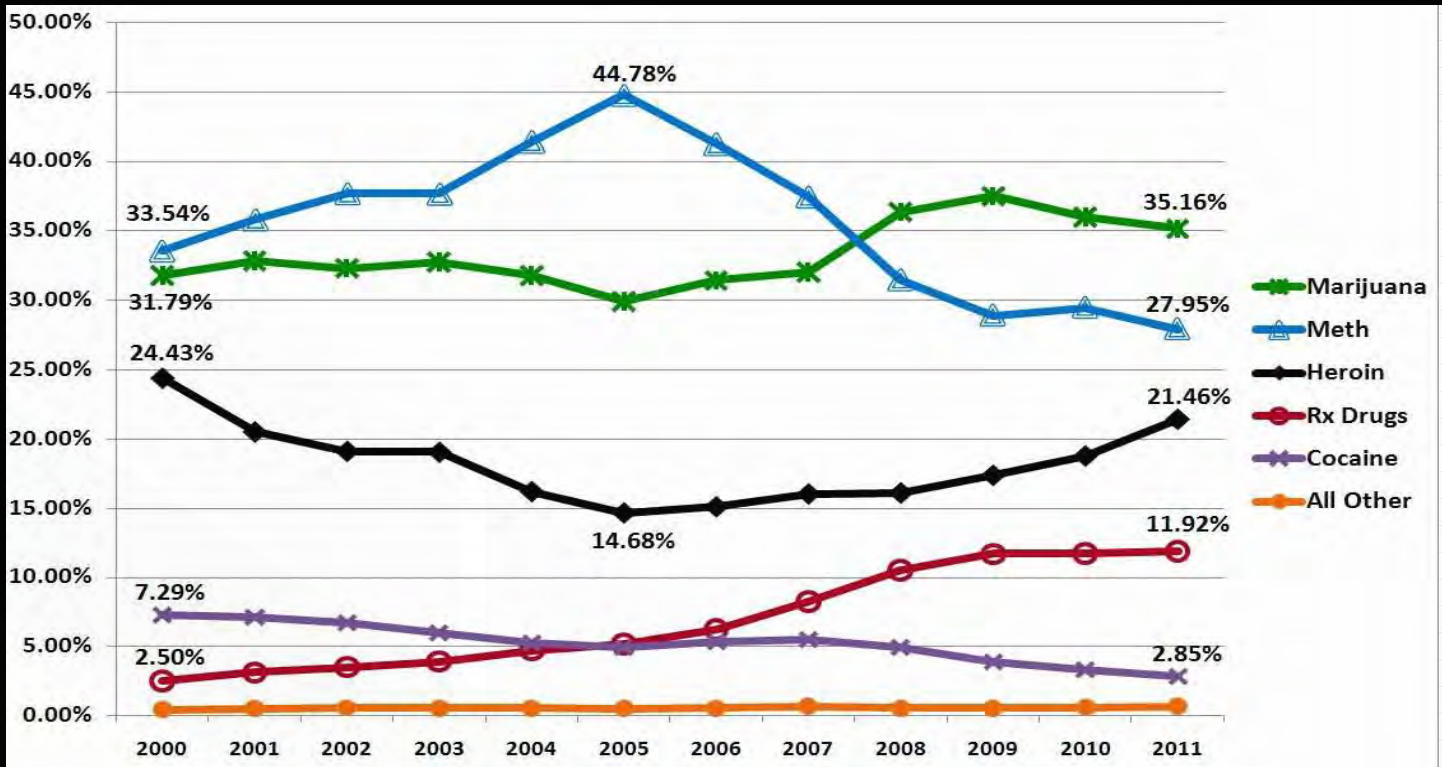
The truth is, the production and distribution of marijuana is already big business and controlled by violent drug cartels. Should this measure pass, the cartels are well positioned and eagerly awaiting a greatly expanded marketplace. We need only look at the violence occurring among warring drug cartels along our border with Mexico to imagine what Oregon might experience.

A recent Rand Corporation study concluded that passage of Proposition 19 (a measure to legalize marijuana) in California would cause marijuana prices to fall so low that criminal organizations will flock to Oregon to buy their dope for resale in their home states. In effect, Measure 80 will make Oregon a launching pad for illicit marijuana dealing across the country. Far from freeing up law enforcement to deal with serious crime, as proponents claim, Measure 80 would mean we would be overwhelmed by international drug cartels that use violence and guns to protect their lucrative markets.

Closer to home, Measure 80 would allow anyone to grow marijuana anywhere – in a vacant lot near a school yard or in a house next door to you. A user could grow football fields of marijuana without any restrictions for personal use. Communities across Oregon are already dealing with fire hazards, security and safety issues posed by marijuana grow houses, which have seriously degraded the quality of life in their community.

Measure 80 prohibits any regulations and fees to grow hemp with undefined THC levels, which is the primary

Oregon Drug Treatment Admissions



Graph derived from client admission data from Addictions and Mental Health Division of the Department of Health and Human Services, March 2011

psychoactive component of marijuana, posing the possibility that thousands of acres of rural farmland across Oregon could be bought up for the sole purpose of growing marijuana and hemp. Federal law currently prohibits the growth of hemp.

- The drug legalizers have a “bring back hemp” campaign aimed at students who are being recruited into the pro-drug ideology by the use of false economic and environmental claims.⁸
- The U. S. Department of Agriculture and other research shows that the hemp market will be only a small,

thin market and is not really economically viable as a fiber or a food or a cosmetic.⁹ Hemp is not an environmentally friendly crop because there is a fertilization requirement and the need to deal with insect pests and the use of fungicides to treat the seeds. Hemp creates more soil nutrient depletion than cotton, flax, and grain crops.¹⁰

- In 1999, the government agency Health Canada, conducted an assessment of human health problems from ingestion of hemp food and cosmetics and pointed out that there were

potential health risks from hemp consumption to the brain, the reproductive system, and cognitive and motor skills.¹¹ Cultivation of industrial hemp as a commercial crop would necessitate enormous monitoring costs to prevent it from being diverted to the illegal drug use market.¹²

Fourth, are we really serious about introducing more mind-altering substances into our society because it might produce tax revenues? The independent Rand Corporation study has warned that any revenue benefits produced by marijuana legalization measures, such as Measure 80, are

highly speculative, at best. Marijuana still remains illegal under federal law. Thus, any locally imposed taxes are legally uncollectible because, according to case law, no one can be compelled to pay a tax that might subject them to prosecution by the federal government. Even if a tax were collectible, it would not begin to cover the associated social and health related costs.

Finally, according to Dr. Kevin Sabet the financial benefits of marijuana legalization would never outweigh its social and health related costs. Promising everything from increased tax revenue and a cure for cancer, to a reduction of violence near the Mexican border and fewer criminal justice costs, legalization advocates have convinced almost half of America that their policy of choice is inevitable and desirable. But their arguments are high on hyperbole and low on facts. Rarely discussed are the potential downsides of such a policy, ranging from increased addiction to greater health and criminal justice costs. In fact, both of our already legal drugs—alcohol and tobacco—offer chilling illustrations of how an open market fuels greater harms. They are cheap and easy to obtain. Commercialization glamorizes their use and furthers their social acceptance. High profits make aggressive marketing worthwhile for sellers. Addiction is simply the price of doing business. Would marijuana use rise in a legal market for the drug? Admittedly, marijuana is not very difficult to obtain currently, but a legal market would make getting the drug that much easier. Tobacco and alcohol are used regularly by 30% and 65% of the population, respectively, while all illegal drugs combined are used by about 8% of Americans.¹³

Law enforcement officers see countless emergency room cases where drugs containing anything from pesticides to

rat poison have been known to cause severe health problems. Marijuana is addicting and people do seek treatment for it. Increased use will lead to increased addiction and increased treatment costs. Adult drug treatment admissions for marijuana use in Oregon have soared above all other illegal drugs. These costs alone would outweigh any theoretical revenue derived.

Please join the many law enforcement groups, faith leaders, victim's rights advocates and employers throughout Oregon who all oppose Measure 80. It's ill-conceived, badly written and creates significant health and safety problems. Drug use is damaging to our communities, our youth and everyone we are sworn to serve and protect. How could we make access to drugs easier? ★

References:

¹ Cesar Analysis of 2009 National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration FARS Data

² "Drugged Driving Getting Worse in Colorado", 9News.com, 2011 February 17

³ Concerned Citizens for Drug Prevention, Inc. citing National Transportation and Safety Board, 1994

⁴ http://www.freevibe.com/Drug_Facts/risks.asp

⁵ Dr. Christian Thurstone, M.D., Director, Denver Health – Substance Abuse, Treatment, Education and Prevention Programs

⁶ <http://addictiontreatmentchallenges.com/2010/08/30/marijuana-did-you-know-is-the-most-commonly-used-illicit-drug-in-america/>

⁷ <https://www.ncjrs.gov/ondcppubs/publications/policy/99ndcs/ii-f.html>

⁸ Hemp Clothing is Here, High Times, March 1990, page 74

⁹ Industrial Hemp in the United States: Status and Market Potential, United States Department of Agriculture, January 2000, (www.ers.usda.gov/publications/ages001E/ Scroll & click Full Report); Atchison, Joseph E., Atchison Consultants, Inc., Sarasota, FL, Putting the Use of Hemp (Cannabis sativa) as a Papermaking Raw Material Into the Proper Perspective, Prepared for Presentation at a DEA sponsored Conference on Hemp Cultivation for Industrial Purpose, Crude Marijuana for Medical Purposes and Legalization of Marijuana, Jefferson City, MO, November 1997.

¹⁰ Williams, Brad, American Forest and Paper Association, Washington, D.C., Hemp, Paper and Reality, July 2, 1999.

¹¹ Health Canada study says THC poses health risk, Article by A. McIlroy, Globe and Mail, Ottawa Canada July 27, 1999.

¹² Correspondence between Timothy Pifer, Laboratory Director for the New Hampshire State Police Forensic Laboratory and Joyce Lohrentz with the Illinois Drug Education Alliance, February 14, 2000; Letter from Chief Murray McMaster, Sarnia Police Force re: Hemp Cultivation - Potency & Enforcement Costs, Charles Perkins, Chairman, Lambton Families In Action for Drug Education, Inc., Sarnia, Canada, May 12, 1995

¹³ Why is Kevin A. Sabet Against the Legalization of Marijuana? <http://loop21.com/politics/kevin-sabet-against-legalization-marijuana>

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