

Illinois Legislators Propose Legalizing Marijuana – HB2353 & SB316

Need to Know the Impact on Young People, Traffic Safety, Workplace, Crime, Economy and ER Visits and Hospital Admissions

Impact on Young People —

- ✓ **Colorado youth lead the nation in marijuana use** — number of 12 to 17-year-olds in last year use, last month use and first time use. **The national average for last month use is 7.20 percent while Colorado's average is 11.13 percent.**¹
- ✓ Youth use in Colorado is disproportionately **higher in counties where pot shops are prevalent.**²
- ✓ After alcohol, **marijuana has the highest rate of dependence or abuse among all drugs.**³
- ✓ Most people using drugs began when they were teens, and **more than half of new illicit drug users started with marijuana.**⁴
- ✓ **Drug use is highest among people in their late teens** and twenties.⁵

Impact on Other Drug Use —

- ✓ People addicted to marijuana are **three times more likely to be addicted to heroin.**⁶
- ✓ Marijuana is a **gateway drug**. Marijuana use dampens the brain's response to reward over time and may actually **open marijuana users up to more risk of becoming addicted to that drug or others.**⁷
- ✓ People susceptible to taking drugs are more likely to begin with **readily accessible drugs, such as marijuana. Sharing the drug using experience with others increases chances of trying different drugs.**⁸

Impact on Traffic Safety —

- ✓ **Marijuana-related traffic deaths in Colorado increased 62 percent** from 71 to 115 persons after recreational marijuana was legalized in 2013.⁹
- ✓ In Spring Valley, Washington State, from 2012 to 2014 **marijuana related DUIs increased 400 percent. Marijuana-only DUIs increased 460 percent.**¹⁰

- ✓ By 2014, Spokane Valley **youth marijuana DUIs increased 1700 percent in three years**. In 2014, **youth accounted for 64 percent of all confirmed marijuana DUI cases** in Spokane Valley.¹¹
- ✓ One in five 10th grade students reported riding with a driver who had used marijuana — **9 percent reported driving within three hours of consumption**.¹²

Impact on the Workplace —

- ✓ Employees who test positive for marijuana have **55 percent more industrial accidents, 85 percent more injuries**, and **75 percent higher absenteeism rates** than those who test negative on pre-employment tests.¹³
- ✓ The owner of Little Spider Creations moved the business because, **“pot was hurting his company.” His employees started to come to work stoned after the state legalized marijuana**.¹⁴

Impact on Crime —

- ✓ Legalization “has done nothing more than **enhance the opportunity for the black market**” according to Lt. Mark Comte of the Colorado Springs Vice and Narcotics Unit.¹⁵
- ✓ The legalization of pot in Colorado appears to have opened the door for **Mexican cartel operations** in the heart of the United States. According to the Colorado’s Attorney General’s office, 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**.”¹⁶
- ✓ The DEA warned that drug trafficking organizations have sophisticated grow operations going in residential areas. Colorado Springs Mayor said, **“Mexican 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.”**¹⁷

Impact on the Economy —

- ✓ As of January 2016, there were **424 retail marijuana stores** in the state of Colorado compared to **322 Starbucks** and **202 McDonald’s**.¹⁸
- ✓ **68 percent** of local jurisdictions have **banned medical and recreational marijuana business**.¹⁹

- ✓ Colorado annual tax revenue from the **sale of recreational and medical marijuana was \$115,578,432 (CY2015) or about 0.5 percent of Colorado's total statewide budget (FY2016).**²⁰
- ✓ **Denver is losing visitors and valuable convention business as a result of these overall safety (or perception of safety) issues...**²¹
Visit Denver Report²¹

Impact on Emergency Department Visits and Hospital Admissions —

- ✓ Colorado Emergency Department visits per year related to marijuana:
 - **2013 – 14,148**
 - **2014 – 18,255**²²
- ✓ Number of hospitalizations related to marijuana:
 - **2011 – 6,305**
 - **2012 – 6,715**
 - **2013 – 8,272**
 - **2014 – 11,439**²³

¹ Letter to Governor John Hickenlooper, <http://coloradopolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Hickenlooper-letter-MTP-final-3-10-17.pdf>

² Supplement to: “The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact, Volume 4. September 2016, March 2017

³ National Institute of Health, National Institute of Drug Abuse, **About the Survey**, June 2015

⁴ National Institute of Health, National Institute of Drug Abuse, **About the Survey**, June 2015

⁵ National Institute of Health, National Institute of Drug Abuse, **About the Survey**, June 2015

⁶ Robert L. DuPont, **Marijuana Has Proven to Be a Gateway Drug**, New York Times, April 26, 2016

⁷ Meghan E. Martz, **Association of Marijuana Use With Blunted Nucleus Accumbens Response to Reward Anticipation**, University of Michigan Health System, *JAMA Psychiatry*, 2016

⁸ National Institute of Health, National Institute of Drug Abuse, **Is marijuana a gateway drug?**, January 2017

⁹ **The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado Impact**, Volume 4, September 2016, Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, <http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2016%20FINAL%20Legalization%20of%20Marijuana%20in%20Colorado%20The%20Impact.pdf>

¹⁰ Washington State Marijuana Impact Report, March 2016, Impaired Driving, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

¹¹ Washington State Marijuana Impact Report, March 2016, Impaired Driving, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

¹² Washington State Marijuana Impact Report, March 2016, Impaired Driving, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

¹³ Tom Pool, **Thinking about dropping marijuana from your drug test?**, Drug Free Business

¹⁴ **Colorado businessman blames ‘stoned’ workers for move to SC**, Fox News.com, April 24, 2015

¹⁵ Letter to Governor John Hickenlooper, <http://coloradopolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Hickenlooper-letter-MTP-final-3-10-17.pdf>

¹⁶ Letter to Governor John Hickenlooper, <http://coloradopolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Hickenlooper-letter-MTP-final-3-10-17.pdf>

¹⁷ Letter to Governor John Hickenlooper, <http://coloradopolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Hickenlooper-letter-MTP-final-3-10-17.pdf>

^{18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23} **The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado Impact**, Volume 4, September 2016, Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, <http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2016%20FINAL%20Legalization%20of%20Marijuana%20in%20Colorado%20The%20Impact.pdf>