Cole Gannon

Professor Cudahy

EWRT 1A

22 February 2021

Legalization of Cannabis Considered Beneficial

"Hey kid, want some pot"? If you're of a certain age, you have probably seen a video in school where a shady-looking figure offers marijuana to an unsuspecting teen. There’s one thing those videos forgot to tell you: cannabis isn't actually that bad after all, and rather than suppressing it, the government would be better served legalizing it. While schools push a strong anti-drug rhetoric, public approval for the legalization of marijuana has been on a steady uptrend, especially with younger age groups (Jones). Even Public sentiment isn’t the only thing changing. Separately, states in the United States of America have been decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana for medicinal or recreational use (Karmen). The UnitedStates of America should legalize marijuana at the federal level for good economic benefits, a good alternative for opioids in pain relief, and an overall reduction in violent, drug related crime.

With a third wave of stimulus checks nearly ready to be sent out, legalizing cannabis at the federal level is a good way to collect taxes on a previously untapped section of the market. In 2019, California was able to collect a whopping $845.3 million dollars in tax from cannabis alone (Murphy). Along with that presents a whole other host of economic benefits such as opening up many new jobs and regulations on federally illegal jobs that exist anyways. An RCG Economics study on marijuana jobs predicts that a little over a quarter million dollars would be generated in labor income from the legalization of marijuana (RCG Economics). According to Leafly and New Frontier, an estimated quarter to a million jobs could be created by 2025 if this was to happen (Murphy, Krishna). From the financial perspectives of an actual drug, nationwide usage of medical marijuana under Medicare would have saved an average of 165.2 million dollars per year (Americans For Safe Access 5).

Not only would medicinal cannabis save money, it is a suitable alternative for opioids with its fewer addictive qualities and just as effective pain relief capabilities. A survey conducted by UCSF regarding opioid substitution with pot found that over 40% of opioid and pot users within 2019 stated that their usage of opioids decreased as a result of using cannabis.

P3: Cannabis as an alternative to opioids

* 1. <https://www.safeaccessnow.org/opioidblueprint>
  2. Pain relief
  3. Segue into another reason why it’s better, namely less violent crime

1. P4: Violent Crime comparison to other drugs including alcohol
   1. Furthermore, legalizing pot will reduce violent drug related crime
      1. <https://partner.sciencenorway.no/cannabis-forskningno-legal-system/legalization-of-medical-marijuana-reduces-crime/1415616> 2nd
         1. <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2350101> 1st
      2. REGULATION OF THE CULTIVATION, MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF MARIJUANA AS A SOLUTION TO DECREASE VIOLENT CRIMES AND INCREASE GOVERNMENTAL INCOMES: <https://go-gale-com.deanza.idm.oclc.org/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=Journals&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&hitCount=5&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=5&docId=GALE%7CA519075095&docType=Report&sort=Relevance&contentSegment=ZXAY-MOD1&prodId=OVIC&pageNum=1&contentSet=GALE%7CA519075095&searchId=R2&userGroupName=ccl_deanza&inPS=true> 1st
      3. The Effect of Medical Marijuana Laws on Crime: Evidence from State Panel Data, 1990-2006 <https://go-gale-com.deanza.idm.oclc.org/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=Journals&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=MultiTab&hitCount=5&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=2&docId=GALE%7CA478746777&docType=Article&sort=Relevance&contentSegment=ZXAY-MOD1&prodId=OVIC&pageNum=1&contentSet=GALE%7CA478746777&searchId=R2&userGroupName=ccl_deanza&inPS=true> 1st
2. P5: Conclusion
   1. Other useful sources/links https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\_of\_cannabis\_laws\_in\_the\_United\_States#Prohibition\_begins\_%E2%80%93\_1911

Sources Cited:

1. Americans for Safe Access, 2017, MEDICAL CANNABIS AS A TOOL TO COMBAT PAIN AND THE OPIOID CRISIS, [www.safeaccessnow.org/opioidblueprint](http://www.safeaccessnow.org/opioidblueprint).
2. Byas, Steve. "Use Pot—Even Medical Marijuana—and Lose Your Second Amendment Rights." Gale Opposing Viewpoints Online Collection, Gale, 2021. Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints, link.gale.com/apps/doc/QNOPJM847681553/OVIC?u=ccl\_deanza&sid=OVIC&xid=fec8d867. Accessed 21 Mar. 2021. Originally published as "Use Pot—Even Medical Marijuana—and Lose Your Second Amendment Rights," The New American, 16 Jan. 2018.
3. Gavrilova, Evelina, et al. 617th ed., vol. 129, The Economic Journal, 2015, pp. 375–407, Is Legal Pot Crippling Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations? The Effect of Medical Marijuana Laws on US Crime.
4. Gruia, George. Addleton Academic Publishers, 2017, pp. 366–371, REGULATION OF THE CULTIVATION, MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF MARIJUANA AS A SOLUTION TO DECREASE VIOLENT CRIMES AND INCREASE GOVERNMENTAL INCOMES.
5. “History of Marijuana on the Ballot.” Ballotpedia, Ballotpedia, ballotpedia.org/History\_of\_marijuana\_on\_the\_ballot.
6. Jones, Jeffrey M. “U.S. Support for Legal Marijuana Steady in Past Year.” Gallup.com, Gallup, 14 Jan. 2021, news.gallup.com/poll/267698/support-legal-marijuana-steady-past-year.aspx.
7. Ishida, Julie H., et al. "Substitution of marijuana for opioids in a national survey of US adults." PLoS ONE, vol. 14, no. 10, 2019, p. e0222577. Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A601726310/OVIC?u=ccl\_deanza&sid=OVIC&xid=53c6fb00. Accessed 21 Mar. 2021.
8. Karmen Hanson, Alise Garcia. State Medical Marijuana Laws, National Conference of State Legislatures, 1 Mar. 2021, www.ncsl.org/research/health/state-medical-marijuana-laws.aspx.
9. Krishna, Mrinalini. “The Economic Benefits of Legalizing Weed.” Investopedia, Dotdash, 20 Dec. 2020, www.investopedia.com/articles/insights/110916/economic-benefits-legalizing-weed.asp.
10. “Majority Now Supports Legalizing Marijuana.” Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy, Pew Research Center, 30 May 2020, www.pewresearch.org/politics/2013/04/04/majority-now-supports-legalizing-marijuana/.
11. Morris, Robert G, et al. 3rd ed., vol. 9, Social Science Research Network, 2014, pp. 1–6, The Effect of Medical Marijuana Laws on Crime: Evidence from State Panel Data.
12. Murphy, Kevin. “Cannabis Is Becoming A Huge Job Creator.” Forbes, Forbes Magazine, 20 May 2019, www.forbes.com/sites/kevinmurphy/2019/05/20/cannabis-is-becoming-a-huge-job-creator/.
13. RCG Economics. "Economic Benefits of Legalized Adult-Use Marijuana in Nevada." Accessed Feb. 28, 2020.
14. Stohr, Mary K, et al. National Institute of Justice, 2020, pp. 1–124, Effects of Marijuana Legalization on Law Enforcement and Crime: Final Report.
15. Zha, Charles. “High Economy: Impacts of Marijuana Legalization on the US Economy.” The Economics Review, 21 Dec. 2020, theeconreview.com/2020/12/18/high-economy-impacts-of-marijuana-legalization-on-the-us-economy/.