

National Alliance for Health and Safety

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TO: The Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Connecticut Legislature

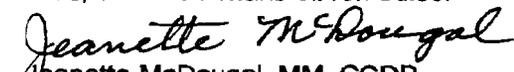
RE: OPPOSE House Bill 6715

TOXIC TAR-LADEN MARIJUANA CIGARETTES ARE NOT A MEDICINE

Should you legalize "medical" marijuana you would be bypassing the FDA process for approving medicine. (Does the state have such a process for approving medicine?) If not, might the state (or its doctors) be held liable for harms caused to citizens by non-medically approved, but legally approved "medical" toxic, tar-laden cigarettes? Who will pay reparations to citizens when these toxic cigarettes make some of them sick? What would the "medical marijuana cigarette" warnings contain? Would the warning labels contain the information that there are over 4000 chemicals (many carcinogenic) in marijuana joints when smoked, most the same as in tobacco cigarettes. (See attachment below)

Is there an age limit set on "medical smoking?" Would K-12 school students be able to smoke their "medical cigarettes" on the school campus -- in the school nurses office? According to a California Teachers Union attorney, students would be able to smoke on campus, or else be able to take their "medical joint" off campus and smoke it there -- coming back to school under the influence.

How would children and others be protected from secondhand marijuana smoke in their own homes? Will "patients" be able to drive vehicles after having smoked? Children believe that what is "medical and legal" is "healthy and good." Could "medical pot" soften children's attitude toward recreational marijuana? The known and potential hazards are too great. Citizens of Connecticut want safe and effective medicines, not toxic, tar-laden snake oil remedies.


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Attachment: First Paragraph of an editorial which appeared in the British Medical Journal comparing the dangers of smoking cannabis with those for smoking tobacco.
Editorials BMJ 2003;326:942-943 (3 May)

Comparing cannabis with tobacco

Smoking cannabis, like smoking tobacco, can be a major public health hazard

Britain now has 13 million tobacco smokers. This number has been steadily decreasing due to public awareness of the harm caused by tobacco smoking. At the same time the number of cannabis smokers is increasing. Between 1999 and 2001, the number of 14-15 year olds who had tried cannabis rose from 19% to 29% in boys and 18% to 25% in girls, and a Home Office document estimates that 3.2 million people in Britain smoke cannabis. 1 2 However, the harmful effects of smoking cannabis are widely known and have recently been highlighted. 3 4 Although the active ingredients of the cannabis plant differ from those of the tobacco plant, each produces about 4000 chemicals when smoked and these are largely identical. Although cannabis cigarettes are smoked less frequently than nicotine cigarettes, their mode of inhalation is very different. Compared with smoking tobacco, smoking cannabis entails a two thirds larger puff volume, a one third larger inhaled volume, a fourfold longer time holding the breath, and a fivefold increase in concentrations of carboxyhaemoglobin. 5 The products of combustion from cannabis are thus retained to a much higher degree. How is this likely to translate into adverse effects on health?