

**Southern Connecticut State University Student Government Resolution 11-02
A Statement of Position Regarding the Decriminalization of Marijuana (SB 1014)**

WHEREAS, possession of less than four ounces of marijuana in Connecticut is currently a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and up to one year in prison;

WHEREAS, SB 1014 would decriminalize marijuana, meaning it would change the penalty for possession of under one ounce of marijuana to an infraction, rather than an arrestable misdemeanor;

WHEREAS, a 2002 poll by Time Magazine and CNN showed that 72% of Americans believe that people caught with marijuana should only receive a fine as punishment, and 4% believe that there should be no punishment;

WHEREAS, multiple studies, including the 2008 report by Jeffrey Miron of Harvard University, *The Effect of Marijuana Decriminalization on the Budgets of Massachusetts Governments, With a Discussion of Decriminalization's Effect on Marijuana Use*, have shown that states that have decriminalized marijuana have not seen a measurable rise in the rate of marijuana usage;

WHEREAS, in 2009, for a nearly identical bill, Connecticut's nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Analysis estimated that decriminalization would save Connecticut taxpayers over \$30 million per year at the state and local levels;

WHEREAS, due to the Aid Elimination Provision of the Higher Education Act of 1965, a drug conviction prevents a student from receiving federal aid, such as Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, and other forms of aid;

WHEREAS, decriminalization would keep first-time marijuana offenders from receiving a conviction that could prevent them from receiving federal aid, and allow these people to attend college to receive an education;

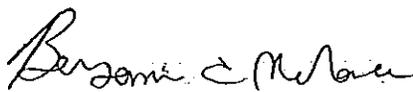
WHEREAS, decriminalization would allow the Southern Connecticut State University Police Department to focus its resources on protecting the community from violent crimes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southern Connecticut State University Student Government Association fully supports marijuana decriminalization;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southern Connecticut State University Student Government Association endorses SB 1014.



Representative Thomas Hils
Author



Representative Benjamin McNamee
President