

Friday, March 9, 2012

Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

The Marijuana and Controlled Substances Tax is an optional (“may” not “shall”) tax and as such “may” exclude “Marijuana” without changing the original statute. That possible future exclusion for “medical or any other reasons” would effectively remove any further hesitation from the passage of HB 5008.

In 2011 the DRS collected a total of \$36,000 of these taxes. A conservative estimate of \$100 million would be collected per year should only one ounce (28.35 grams) of controlled substances be taxed per drug-related arrest within the Connecticut communities of 25,000 population or less and with only 50% of those taxes collected.

This estimate was computed by taking the recorded number of drug-related arrests for 2011 in each of the 159 communities and multiplying that number by one ounce at the controlled-drug (street-value in 1991) tax of \$200 per gram.

Controlled substances are the D.E.A. - documented cause of over 20,000 drug overdose deaths in the U. S. in 2011. The number of drug overdose deaths in Connecticut need to be ascertained from the religious community, since the obituaries in drug-overdose cases seldom reveal the true cause of these deaths so as not to embarrass the bereaved, and continues to be a continuing pandemic among our youth between 16 and 32 years of age.

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