

# Town of Southington



## Town Council

CHRISTOPHER J. PALMIERI, CHAIRMAN  
DAWN A. MICELI, VICE CHAIRMAN  
JOHN N. BARRY  
WILLIAM DZIEDZIC  
TOM LOMBARDI  
KELLY MORRISSEY  
CHRISTOPHER J. POULOS  
MICHAEL RICCIO  
VICTORIA TRIANO

## Town Manager

MARK J. SCIOTA  
(860) 276-6200  
FAX (860) 628-1727

March 20, 2018

Att. Judiciary Committee

Re: Senate Bill #487 an Act Concerning the Legalization, Taxation and Regulation of the Retail Sale and Recreational Use of Marijuana and Concerning the Production and Regulation of Hemp.

Dear Committee;

As a member of the Southington Town Council for over 20 years, and further as a founding member of our local Youth Prevention Coalition, I have seen the critical need for our Communities, our Local Government and our State Legislators to join together to do everything we can to protect our youth from the ongoing use of recreational marijuana. The facts contained herein, are accurate and verifiable and were given to me by a concerned parent and Attorney. Bo Huhn.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **OPM INCARCERATION STATISTICS SHOW THAT ONLY 17 PEOPLE WERE INCARCERATED FOR POSSESSION OF LESS THAN 4 OZ. OF MARIJUANA AS OF 2015**

**RE: Senate Bill # \*S.B. No. 487 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGALIZATION, TAXATION AND REGULATION OF THE RETAIL SALE AND RECREATIONAL USE OF MARIJUANA AND CONCERNING THE PRODUCTION AND REGULATION OF HEMP.**

Proponents of legalization claim that Connecticut's marijuana laws cause mass incarceration of minority youth for possession of small quantities of MJ.

As of March 2015, an OPM study of the offenses for which people in Connecticut are incarcerated found that only **seventeen** were incarcerated for possession of less than four oz. of MJ or controlled substances, and an additional **thirty two** for possession of hallucinogens or 4+ oz. of MJ. A total of **16,095** people were incarcerated as of that date. And the total minorities incarcerated for possession of MJ is surely less than a total of forty-nine. There are no OPM statistics breaking out minority status for these offenses, but some of the **forty-nine** would have been white. Some of the forty-nine would have been incarcerated for possession of hallucinogens or other controlled substances, and some of

"City of Progress"

P.O. Box 610

75 Main Street

Southington, CT 06489

those incarcerated for possession of MJ would have plea-bargained from more serious charges. Fortunately people of color are not victims of mass incarceration for possession of MJ.

See pages 2 and 3 of the OPM CJPPD home page for the March 2015 report: [CT.gov total population by controlling offense](#). Since marijuana was decriminalized in 2010, CT incarceration rates for possession of marijuana have virtually disappeared.

The 2015 OPM report shows that 146 people were incarcerated for sale of Controlled substances, but it is unlikely that legalization of MJ would decrease those incarcerations. Dealers will continue to sell black market MJ illegally at a lower price than legal retail MJ subject to a 23% tax. It will be necessary to rigorously prosecute dealers who sell in the black market, or to protect the legal retail market from the cheaper illegal competition.

The Colorado Impact study, prepared by the federal government to assess Colorado's experience, [The Impact of Legalization in CO](#), includes thirty pages related to marijuana crime in the state. ( See pages 90 -123.) In addition to black market illegal sales and distribution out of state (252 felony arrests in 2016 by ten federal drug task forces), the report describes the increase in fatalities from MJ DWI, theft, fraud and even homicide related to MJ.

Crime in Denver increased 6% from 2014 to 2016 and crime in Colorado increased 11% percent from 2013 to 2016. (See p. 117 – 121.) The report doesn't speculate on the cause of the increased crime rate, but it is hard to argue that legalization reduces general crime. The crime case studies at page 121-123 make the statistics real.

### **PAGES 1-3 OF OPM REPORT ON INCARCERATION STATISTICS.\***

The following three pages are from the six pages OPM report cited in the first paragraph of this testimony. The committee rules limited the number of pages that can be submitted to you, but the entire report can be found at the link to the OPM website. The total number of people incarcerated at the time of the March 2015 report was 16,095. The numbers for possession of MJ are found on pages 2 and 3. Possession of more than 4 oz. of MJ, 32 people, page 2; possession of less than 4 oz. of MJ, 17 people, page 3.

#### **Total Population by Controlling Offense March 12, 2015 \***

Offense (Controlling)	Total
VIOLATION OF PROB OR COND DISCHARGE	2102
SALE OF HALLUCIGEN/NARCOTIC SUBSTNC F	1023
ROBBERY, FIRST DEGREE BF	887
MURDER AF	740
POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS F	483
SPECIAL PAROLE	461

**"City of Progress"**  
P.O. Box 610

CONSPIRACY	456
HOME INVASION AF	147
<b>SALE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE F</b>	<b>146</b>
CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR ANOTHER PERSON	140
<b>POSSESS OF HALLUC OR 4+ OZ MARIJ F</b>	<b>32</b>
ILL/TRANSFER/PISTOL/REVOLVER F	17
<b>POSSESS OF LT 4 OZ MJ OR CONTRLD SUB</b>	<b>17</b>
ASSAULT 1ST VICTIM 60 OR OVER BF	15
DRUG PARAPHERNALIA IN DRUG FACTORY F	15

\*Some charges have been extracted for space concerns.

\*\*\*\*\*

I believe it is important for the Judiciary committee to have the OPM incarceration data for your records. Many times the public is under the impression that urban youth are incarcerated at a much higher rate for possession of Marijuana, yet even in moderate size towns, as Southington, or ever smaller communities, this issue is extremely important.

Thank You for your time.

*Rev. Victoria Triano*

Rev. Victoria Triano  
Town Council, Southington

**"City of Progress"**  
P.O. Box 610