

Dear Finance Committee:

I am writing regarding SB#1138. Please consider the costs to the state of the bureaucracy for licensing, taxation and law enforcement of recreational marijuana. Consider the impact of disruptions to education, increased schizophrenia, employment issues, additional addiction, additional DWI injuries and fatalities and hospital and medical costs due to recreational marijuana. In fact, Colorado marijuana-related traffic deaths increased 48 percent in the three year average (2013-2015) since Colorado legalized recreational marijuana compared to the three year average (2010-2012) prior to legalization (The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact 2016, page 13). Increased traffic fatalities and impaired driving are further complicated by the fact that there is currently no effective test for driving under the influence of drugs. An accurate roadside test for drug levels in the body doesn't exist and marijuana can remain in a user's system for days or weeks after last use, depending on how much a person uses and how often they use marijuana (Centers for Disease Control, What You Need to Know About Marijuana Use and Driving 2017).

It is also imperative to consider the effects of legalizing recreational marijuana on Connecticut youth. The states that have legalized recreational marijuana have much higher teen use of marijuana than those states that have not. Please see below, past month marijuana usage of 12-17 year olds, 2016, 2017 (SAMHSA.gov, National Survey on Drug Use and Health).

Ten states with the highest teen 30 day marijuana use:

- 1) VT: 10.75% (legalized)
- 2) OR: 10.35% (legalized)
- 3) ME: 9.88% (legalized)
- 4) NM: 9.74% (medical marijuana)
- 5) RI: 9.49% (medical marijuana)
- 6) CO: 9.02% (legalized)
- 7) WA (state): 8.96% (legalized)
- 8) MA: 8.91% (legalized)
- 9) AK: 8.84% (legalized)
- 10) NV: 8.82% (legalized)

Ten states with the lowest teen 30 day marijuana use:

- 41) WV: 5.45%
- 42) GA: 5.39%
- 43) OK: 5.38%
- 44) NJ: 5.16% (medical marijuana)
- 45) KS: 5.16%
- 46) IA: 5.11%
- 47) MS: 5.05%
- 48) ND: 4.99%
- 49) TX: 4.86%
- 50) UT: 4.71%

Please consider the impacts of recreational marijuana on the state of Connecticut, it's residents and youth.

Sincerely,

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