

A Resolution in support of Decriminalizing Marijuana & Generating Revenue for Higher  
Education

WHEREAS Washington state constitution mandates a balanced budget, and,

WHEREAS according to federal office of National Drug Policy, marijuana arrests in Washington state amounted to an expenditure of \$169.39 million in 2006 (1), and nationally, for all marijuana related law enforcement estimates \$7.2 billion annually (2), and,

WHEREAS marijuana arrests account for on average 50% of drug related arrests in both Washington state and the United States (1), and

WHEREAS study estimates that marijuana production, at a value of \$35.8 billion, exceeds the combined value of corn (\$23.3 billion) and wheat (\$7.5 billion) (2) nationally, and,

WHEREAS given marijuana is the United State's primary cash crop since the Controlled Substance Act of 1970, governmental eradication efforts illustrates that our present marijuana laws need modification, and,

WHEREAS A 2005 analysis by [Harvard](#) visiting professor Jeffrey Miron estimates that if the United States legalized marijuana, the country would save \$7.7 billion in law enforcement costs and could generate upwards of \$6.2 billion annually if marijuana were taxed like alcohol or tobacco (3), and,

WHEREAS Miron's report on the costs of marijuana prohibition was signed by more than 500 leading economists, most notably the late Nobel laureate [Milton Friedman](#), who served as an economist in both the Nixon and Reagan administrations (3), and, (--> think about if r's would really care about)

WHEREAS the Washington State Bar Association and King County Medical Association support decriminalization (4), and,

WHEREAS marijuana is drastically less addictive -if addictive at all- and less physically harmful than both alcohol and tobacco (5), and, -> probably draws negative attention. call washington state association of alcoholism and addiction programs

WHEREAS marijuana has proven medical uses (6), and has been legalized in thirteen states for medical use, and,

WHEREAS twelve states have decriminalized marijuana; Alaska, California, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon (7), and, in sum, there is little evidence that decriminalization of marijuana leads to a substantial increase in marijuana use (8)(9), and,

WHEREAS the Washington Poll, a non-partisan academic survey research project facilitated through the research center at the University of Washington in the School of Social Sciences found 52% to 35% in favor of removing state civil and criminal penalties for possession or use of marijuana (10),

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WASHINGTON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

THAT the WSA supports decriminalizing marijuana, and,

THAT a portion of revenue generated from decriminalizing marijuana be put towards higher education, among other things.

Think about the argument against, such as 18-25 year olds and dui's, should we lessen these laws?

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### Sources

(1) Marijuana Use in Washington State: Arrests, Usage, & Related Data

<http://www.drugscience.org/States/WA/WA.pdf>

(2) (3) Marijuana Production in the United States

<http://abcnews.go.com/business/story?id=2735017&page=1>

(4) <http://elections.firedoglake.com/2010/06/02/washington-state-favors-marijuana-legalization-52-to-35/>

(5) "Development of a rational scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential misuse". Nutt D, King LA, Saulsbury W, Blakemore C (March 2007). *Lancet* **369** (9566): 1047–53.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17382831>

(6) ^ Mohamed Ben Amar (2006). "Cannabinoids in medicine: A review of their therapeutic potential". *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* **105** (1–2): 1–25.

doi:10.1016/j.jep.2006.02.001. Retrieved 8 April 2010.

(7) States That Have Decriminalized Marijuana

-“Drug Policy for the 21st Century” Conference, February 4, 2009 at Central Connecticut State University Researched and prepared by Brad Tilles (ISCJ Graduate Assistant)

[http://www.ccsu.edu/uploaded/images/Marijuana\\_Decriminalization.pdf](http://www.ccsu.edu/uploaded/images/Marijuana_Decriminalization.pdf)

(8) National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM). 1999. [\*Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base\*](#). National Academy Press: Washington, D.C., 102.

(9) [Marijuana Decriminalization & Its Impact on Use](#)  
[http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=3383](http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=3383)

(10) The Washington Poll: Issues & Opinions May 2010  
<http://www.washingtonpoll.org/results/MAY2010.pdf>

### **Etc. Info**

#### **Legislation goal:**

- Present factually based non-partisan resolution that if ultimately passed would generate revenue.
- Align legislation with primary component of WSA mission, so as to not dilute our primary mission of advocating for higher education. A primary component of our mission, as discussed at the last Fall General Assembly, was Supporting sustainable & fair revenue generation that can be used to support higher education.

WHEREAS the current marijuana laws disproportionately target the 18-25 age demographic- Males aged 15 to 24 account for 52% of all marijuana arrests. While the national rate of marijuana possession arrests is 248 per 100,000, the arrest rate for males aged 15 to 19 is 1,911 per 100,000 (1), and,

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Office\\_on\\_Drugs\\_and\\_Crime](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Office_on_Drugs_and_Crime)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decriminalization\\_of\\_non-medical\\_cannabis\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decriminalization_of_non-medical_cannabis_in_the_United_States)

## The Drugs-Crime Wars: Past, Present, and Future Directions in Theory, Policy, and Program Interventions

[-http://www.impacteen.org/generalarea\\_PDFs/CJRE\\_mcbrideJuly2002.pdf](http://www.impacteen.org/generalarea_PDFs/CJRE_mcbrideJuly2002.pdf)

Marijuana Poses a Scientific Challenge to the War on Drugs

[-http://www.caivn.org/article/2010/05/29/marijuana-poses-scientific-challenge-war-drugs](http://www.caivn.org/article/2010/05/29/marijuana-poses-scientific-challenge-war-drugs)

Researchers Find Study of Medical Marijuana Discouraged (NY Times)

[-http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/19/health/policy/19marijuana.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/19/health/policy/19marijuana.html)

-Marijuana is the only major drug for which the federal government controls the only legal research supply and for which the government requires a special scientific review.

-“As the National Institute on Drug Abuse, our focus is primarily on the negative consequences of marijuana use,” said Shirley Simson, a spokeswoman for the [drug abuse](#) institute, known as NIDA. “We generally do not fund research focused on the potential beneficial medical effects of marijuana.”

-Multiple Agency Fiscal Note Summary on Bill

<https://fortress.wa.gov/binaryDisplay.aspx?package=25117> -starts on page 4.

-Bill HB 1177: Reclassifying possession of forty grams or less of marijuana from a misdemeanor to a class 2 civil infraction.

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1177&year=2009>

-Bill 1177 Summary

[-http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1177%20HBA%20PSEP%2010.pdf](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1177%20HBA%20PSEP%2010.pdf)

Males aged 15 to 24 account for 52% of all marijuana arrests. While the national rate of marijuana possession arrests is 248 per 100,000, the arrest rate for males aged 15 to 19 is 1,911 per 100,000.

While the marijuana-use rate for African-Americans is only about 25% greater than for whites, the marijuana possession arrest rate for blacks is three times greater. This is not a regional disparity, but is seen in every state and most counties.

Using the same method of calculation used by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, marijuana arrests cost state and local governments \$10.3 billion in 2006.

During 2007, Washington became one of 14 states that allowed for usage of marijuana for medical purposes. The regulation for this legislation is covered under RCW Chapter 69.

Approximately 5% of all offenders of marijuana related offenses pertained to some type of violence. **Decriminalizing may lead to decreased crim due to** lack of motivation in smuggling across the border or private drug deals.

In 2008, 30.3% of 8th graders, 44.9% of 10th graders, and 52.8% of all 12th graders in the United States reported using marijuana. [1]

33.8% of minors report having smoked cigarettes within their lifetime.

They found that a person's level of pain, energy, mood, nausea, appetite, and awareness were all affected when using marijuana for chronic pain, Glaucoma, cancer, or HIV/AIDS. All of these without exception were affected positively - and according to the study, significantly positive changes arose from the usage of marijuana.[1]

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[1] [www.drugpolicy.org/docUploads/wammstudy.pdf](http://www.drugpolicy.org/docUploads/wammstudy.pdf)

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[1] <http://www.teendrugabuse.us/teendrugstatistics.html>

## **Bill Details**

### **Quotes**

-“Do you choose to provide health care for x number of children or fund criminalizing marijuana possession?” -Brendan Williams (D-22, Olympia), bill co-sponsor

-From article: ‘A recent poll shows 81 percent of Washington voters believe [marijuana] laws aren’t working....Massachusetts voters passed a nearly identical measure in November by a 30-point margin.

-In a 2008 [editorial](#) [9] exposing the government's cannabis health patent, Brinna Nanda gives some startling statistics concerning the effects of marijuana prohibition. Nearly one million people a year are arrested for marijuana related “crimes” – half of all drug arrests. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world with one in every hundred currently in jail.

### **Sponsors**

Primary: Dave Upthegrove (D-33, south King County)  
Co-Sponsors: Brendan Williams (D-22, Olympia),

reducing the need for further budget cuts through generating revenue via regulation and lessening cost of law enforcement

\$20-80 million

Alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs-they've made drugs with thc.

Won't put these out of business. Alcohol has a monopoly on this market.

google decriminalizing marijuana in washington state.

war on drugs: 1 billion cost for marijuana. More than any other drug combined.

--> Look for other state organizations in support of this.

--> Don't want to lose legislators support.

| Must align with WSA Mission |

WSA Mission

1. Supporting Higher Education
2. Supporting sustainable & fair revenue generation towards Higher Education

Etc. Info

Bill

### **Links**

[-Bill](#) to reduce to \$100 fine

[-Article](#) on this bill

-Bill Fiscal [Summary](#)