

## ... It's time for a new approach.

- **Sixty-six percent of Americans believe marijuana should be legalized**, according to an October 2018 Gallup Poll.
- Regulation makes it more difficult for teens to buy marijuana – **drug dealers don't check ID.**
- **Regulation enhances consumer safety.** Regulated cannabis can be labeled for potency, tested for contaminants, and safely packaged.

Marijuana is safer than alcohol:

Marijuana		Alcohol
<b>NO</b>	overdose deaths?	<b>YES</b>
<b>NO</b>	chronic diseases?	<b>YES</b>
<b>NO</b>	violent crimes?	<b>YES</b>
<b>NO</b>	reckless behavior?	<b>YES</b>

Adults should be allowed to make the safer choice.

## About MPP

MPP led the successful efforts to legalize cannabis for adults' use in Colorado (2012); Alaska (2014); Maine, Massachusetts, and Nevada (2016); Michigan and Vermont (2018); and Illinois (2019), along with most statewide medical marijuana and decriminalization efforts in the past 15 years.

We envision a nation where marijuana is legally regulated similarly to alcohol, marijuana education is honest and realistic, and treatment for problem marijuana users is non-coercive and geared toward reducing harm.



MPP's Chris Lindsey (center) with Illinois legislative champions at the bill signing for the Illinois adult-use cannabis law, June 2019

## Work with us!

MPP works in all 50 states and at the federal level. We are happy to be a resource for policymakers on marijuana policy reform issues. Contact us at [state@mpp.org](mailto:state@mpp.org).

Advocates, please get involved at [mpp.org](http://mpp.org).



The case for

# Taxing and Regulating Marijuana like Alcohol

"A few years ago, the illegal trafficking of marijuana lined the pockets of criminals everywhere. Now, in our state, illegal trafficking activity is being displaced by a closely regulated marijuana industry that pays hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes. This frees up significant law enforcement resources to protect our communities in other, more pressing ways."

- Gov. Jay Inslee and AG Bob Ferguson of Washington

"There is no logical basis for the prohibition of marijuana."

- The late Milton Friedman, Nobel Prize-winning economist

[www.mpp.org](http://www.mpp.org)

# Marijuana prohibition has failed. . .

- **Fifty-two percent** of American adults admit they have tried marijuana, according to a 2017 Marist Poll.
- **659,700 people** were arrested or cited for marijuana offenses in 2017. That's one person every 48 seconds — and **91%** of those were **just for possession**.
- A criminal record comes with devastating collateral consequences that make it harder to get a job, housing, or an education.
- **Prohibition has been unevenly enforced:** Blacks are 3.7 times as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession as whites, despite similar usage rates.
- Prohibition means police spend time and resources targeting marijuana consumers that they could use to catch violent criminals.
- Under prohibition, **profits from the sale of marijuana go to criminal gangs and cartels** instead of legitimate businesses that pay taxes.
- Consumers don't know what they are purchasing on the illegal market. Regulation allows states to require that products be labeled for potency and tested for contaminants.

## How are things going in states that have ended prohibition?

### Jobs and Economy

- Colorado has issued more than 40,000 licenses for work directly in its cannabis industry, not counting jobs in ancillary businesses.
- Colorado and Washington — the first two states to make marijuana legal for adults — both rank among the best economies in the nation.

### Revenue

- Washington raised more than \$430 million in marijuana tax revenue in 2018.
- Colorado's marijuana excise taxes raised \$250 million in 2018.
- In the first year of marijuana sales, Nevada generated over \$69 million in marijuana taxes, exceeding projections by 40%.

### Youth

- Opponents' fears that teen marijuana use and drop out rates would increase have proven unfounded. Colorado youth marijuana use rates have decreased slightly since legalization, and they have been stable in Washington.
- On-time graduation rates have increased post-legalization in both Washington (from 77.2% to 79.3%) and Colorado (from 77.3% to 79%).

*"After the election, if I could've had a magic wand, and I could've waved it and reversed the outcome of the election [regulating marijuana for adults], I would've done it. Now if I had that same magic wand, I'm not sure I'd wave it."* - Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper



Denver Relief Dispensary, CO (credit: Whaxy)

## Debunking Common Myths About Marijuana



### Myth #1: Marijuana is a "Gateway Drug."

False. The vast majority of people who use marijuana never try other drugs. In addition, marijuana "does not appear to be a gateway drug to the extent that it is the cause or even that it is the most significant predictor of serious drug abuse; care must be taken not to attribute cause to association."

- Institute of Medicine

### Myth #2: Legalizing marijuana for adults will increase youth use.

False. The most comprehensive studies in Colorado and Washington show that high school students' teen use rates were flat or decreased slightly since marijuana became legal for adults.

- Healthy Kids Colorado Survey and Youth Risk Behavior Survey  
- Washington State Healthy Youth Survey

### Myth #3: Marijuana is highly addictive.

False. "Although few marijuana users develop dependence, some do. But they appear to be less likely to do so than users of other drugs (including alcohol and nicotine), and marijuana dependence appears to be less severe than dependence on other drugs."

- Institute of Medicine