



The Executive Budget once again attempts to legalize recreational marijuana, creates a new Office of Cannabis Management, and tries to help balance the budget with purported marijuana revenue.

NYS PTA continues to fiercely oppose these measures - there is no amount of revenue that can offset the harm of the legalization of marijuana on our children.

More alarmingly, the 30-day amendments unconscionably reduce the penalty for selling marijuana to a minor. Yes – you read that correctly. The Executive’s proposal actually lessens the penalties to selling marijuana to a child under the age of 21 to only a class A misdemeanor.

We have NO idea why the Executive would lower penalties, thereby making it more appealing to sell marijuana to children – while at the same time allegedly vowing to protect children from the harms of marijuana.

NYS PTA urges you to heed the recommendations from leading medical and public health organizations, education groups, and the law enforcement community and NOT legalize recreational marijuana.

With the serious crisis of youth vaping and tobacco use, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, while battling the opioid crisis, this harmful legislation is counterintuitive, and the 30-day amendments are shocking.

Protect Our Children

Oppose the Legalization of Recreational Marijuana

A new report in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs detailed exactly our point – children from California are significantly more likely to use marijuana since its legalization there in 2016.

Data from over three million 7th, 9th, and 11th grade students who participated in the California Healthy Kids Survey from 2010-2011 through 2018-2019 school years revealed a “significant increase” in marijuana usage. This data revealed **an 18% increase in the likelihood of lifetime marijuana use and a 23% increase in past 30-day usage since California legalized marijuana.**

The researchers concluded that legalization likely presented increased opportunities for adolescents to obtain marijuana, and specifically pointed to increased availability of non-smoking marijuana products such as edibles.

Further, Nevada and Oregon saw similar trends: once legalized, youth marijuana usage significantly increased when analyzing data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Lastly, the argument that marijuana will be a significant revenue generator is false.

The director of the Division of Budget himself told press that the initial estimates of hundreds of millions of dollars would not be realized. In California, marijuana revenue was 92% LESS than expected.

The anticipated costs associated with legalization far outweigh any revenue: increased health care and medical costs, increased law enforcement and court administration costs, increased substance use prevention and treatment costs, burden on school districts, burden on the economy and workplaces, and increased costs for mental health services.

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