

Americans agree: *marijuana prohibition has failed.*

Support California's solution: AB 2254

A.B. 2254, introduced by Assemblyman Tom Ammiano (D-San Francisco), is sensible legislation that would make California a model for fiscally sound and effective marijuana policy. A.B. 2254 removes state-level criminal penalties for private adult use, possession, and limited cultivation of marijuana. It also replaces California's \$14 billion underground marijuana market with a controlled system that would be regulated and taxed in a manner comparable to alcohol.

A.B. 2254 would...

- ✓ **Save taxpayer dollars and generate revenue.** According to California Board of Equalization Chair, Betty Yee, taxing marijuana – the state's top cash crop – would generate an estimated \$1.3 billion in new annual revenue. California taxpayers are also spending hundreds of millions on marijuana prohibition every year and by all accounts, these costly efforts have no effect on marijuana use or availability. The combined yearly savings and revenue generated by A.B. 2254 will help California fund vital services like education, health care, and public safety.
- ✓ **Reduce teen marijuana use and availability.** More California teens report using marijuana than tobacco¹ because in a prohibition-market, illegal drug dealers don't card for age. A.B. 2254 would require licensed vendors to work to prevent teens from buying marijuana – just as California has seen sales of tobacco to minors fall dramatically as a result of strict controls preventing underage tobacco purchases.
- ✓ **Make our communities safer.** Removing marijuana from the criminal market would free up police time so officers can focus on violent crimes, property crimes, and people who drive under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or any other substance. Tax dollars would be used to incarcerate real criminals who threaten public safety. Regulating marijuana would also significantly de-fund violent Mexican drug cartels that, according to White House reports, rely on illegal marijuana for more than 60% of their income.
- ✓ **Protect our public lands.** Every year, more and more clandestine marijuana farms are being discovered on California's public lands. These criminal operations pose a risk to hikers and the environment – and cost taxpayers millions in eradication and clean-up. These bootleg-style operations would not exist if not for disastrous prohibition policies. Regulating marijuana like alcohol will immediately eliminate any incentive to grow on public land. After all, California's wine industry isn't planting vineyards on public lands.

AB 2254 would not...

- ✗ Legalize marijuana for those under 21.
- ✗ Allow driving under the influence of marijuana.
- ✗ Prohibit employers from drug testing.
- ✗ Impose new taxes on medical marijuana patients.

58% of West Coast voters believe that marijuana should be "taxed and legally regulated like alcohol and cigarettes."

- Zogby International Polling, January 29, 2009

¹ "12th Biennial California Student Survey Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use 2007-08"

California's Failed War on Marijuana:

Arrests have failed to stop use...

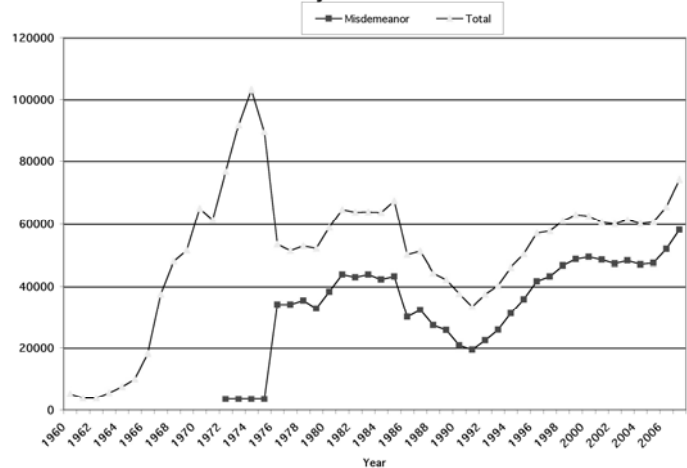
Very few Americans had even heard of marijuana when California first outlawed its use in 1913. Despite felony penalties, the nation saw an explosion of marijuana use in the 1960s and 1970s.

Now, about one in ten Californians admit to government survey-takers that they have used marijuana in the last year and nearly 2 million Californians use marijuana at least monthly.

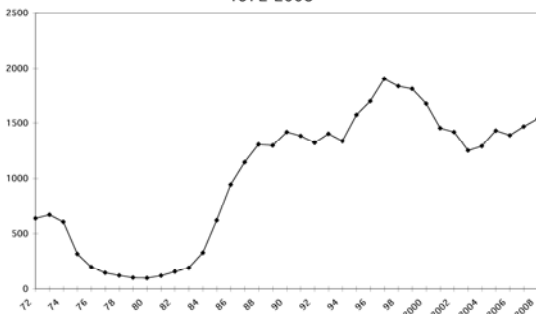
Since 1975, the state has averaged 16,400 felony and 55,200 misdemeanor arrests per year. Arrests climbed to their highest level since decriminalization in 2007 but use remains stable.

African Americans are five times as likely as whites to be arrested for marijuana felonies.

California Marijuana Arrests: 1960-2007



Marijuana Prisoners in California
1972-2008



...Imprisonment has soared since the 1980s

As of Dec 31, 2008, there were 1,538 offenders in state prison on marijuana charges. An unknown additional number were held in county jails.

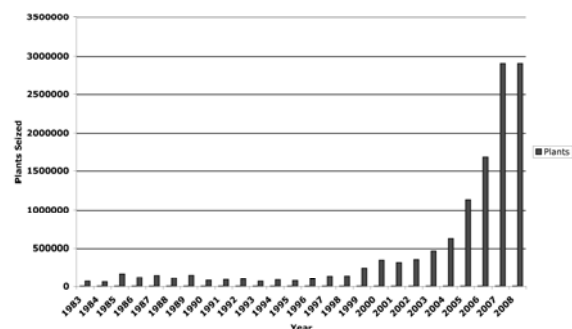
The number of marijuana prisoners exploded following the Reagan-Bush war on drugs, and is now 15 times higher than in the early 1980s. There has been no accompanying decrease in marijuana use or offenses.

...While CAMP plant seizures reach record levels

California's CAMP (Campaign Against Marijuana Planting) eradication program has been operating since 1983. The number of plants eradicated has soared in recent years, reaching an all-time record high of 2.9 million in 2007-8.

At \$1,000 per plant, the value of the eradicated crop equals some \$3 billion – enough to qualify as a major agricultural disaster.

CAMP Plant Seizures
1983-2008



...And how dangerous is marijuana compared to other drugs?

Unlike with alcohol and tobacco, no one has ever died from using marijuana. The National Institute of Medicine has concluded that marijuana does not cause people to use more dangerous drugs, although prohibitionist policies may. While marijuana isn't risk-free, its risks are lower than those of many legal drugs.

| | Alcohol | Tobacco | Acetaminophen (Tylenol) | Marijuana |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Overdose can cause death? | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Number of U.S. deaths annually | 21,634 | 353,300 | 458 | 0 |

Californians for Marijuana Regulation

A partnership of the Drug Policy Alliance, Marijuana Policy Project, and the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws.

DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE
Reason. Compassion. Justice.



NORML

www.drugpolicy.org – www.mpp.org – www.canorml.org