



## Feds Reaffirm That They Will Not Likely Challenge State Legalization Laws

**Washington, DC:** United States Deputy Attorney General James Cole reaffirmed that the Justice Department is unlikely to challenge statewide marijuana legalization efforts, provided that these efforts impose "robust regulations" which discourage sales to minors and seek to prevent the diversion of cannabis to states that have not yet legalized its use.

"We will not ... seek to preempt state ballot initiatives," Cole told members of the US Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, adding that state "decriminalization [laws] can co-exist with federal [drug] laws."

In an August 29 Department of Justice memorandum, Deputy Attorney General Cole had previously directed the US Attorneys in all 50 states not to interfere with the implementation of state marijuana regulations, unless such activities specifically undermined eight explicit federal law enforcement priorities.

In response to a question from Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Cole also stated that federal prosecutors should utilize similar discretion and not interfere with the activities of state-compliant cannabis dispensaries, as long as

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### DEA: Marijuana Plant Seizures Decline To Lowest Levels In Nearly A Decade

Washington, DC: Seizures of indoor and outdoor cannabis crops by the US Drug Enforcement Administration have declined dramatically from 2011 to 2012 and are now at their lowest reported levels in nearly a decade, according to statistics released online by the federal anti-drug agency.

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### Annual Total Of Marijuana Arrests Holds Steady In 2012

**Washington, DC:** Police made an estimated 750,000 arrests for violations of marijuana laws in 2012 according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's annual Uniform Crime Report, a total that is largely unchanged from 2011 figures, but represents a decline from the record annual highs reported between the years 2006 and 2010.

According to the report, marijuana arrests comprise nearly half (48.3 percent) of the 1.5 million annual illicit drug arrests in the United States.

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### Study: Cannabis Consumption Plays Little Role In Global Disease Burden

**Sydney, Australia:** Cannabis use is not a significant contributor to the global burden of disease, according to an epidemiological review published in *The Lancet*. An international team of researchers from Australia and the United States assessed the global prevalence of illicit drug use and quantified its adverse effects on health, as measured

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### 25 Years Ago: DEA's Own Administrative Law Judge Ruled Cannabis Should Be Reclassified Under Federal Law

**Washington, DC:** Friday, September 6, 2013 marks the 25-year anniversary of an administrative ruling which determined that cannabis possesses accepted medical utility and ought to be reclassified accordingly under federal law.

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## The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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Check 'em out on-line! *visit:*

**WillametteValleyNORML.org**

## A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

**The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.**

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: [www.norml.org](http://www.norml.org)**

Willamette Valley NORML is your local network in the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

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their actions "are not violating any of the eight federal enforcement priorities" outlined in the agency's August 29th memo. Rhode Island is one of six states, as well as Washington, DC, that presently licenses the production and distribution of medical cannabis. Six additional states are expected to enact similar licensing regulations in the coming months.



Several Senators and witnesses questioned whether the Justice Department would consider amending federal financial regulations that presently inhibit state-compliant cannabis businesses from taking standardized tax deductions and partnering with conventional financial institutions. Deputy Attorney General Cole responded that such proposed changes in law were arguably the responsibility of Congressional lawmakers, not the Justice Department.

Commenting on the hearing, NORML Communications Director Erik Altieri said, "For the first time in modern history, members of the US Congress and the Justice Department were not discussing furthering cannabis prohibition, but instead were testifying to the merits of cannabis legalization and regulation."

The hearings marked the first time that members of Congress have explicitly weighed in on the conflict between state and federal marijuana laws since voters in Colorado and Washington elected to legalize the retail production and sale of the plant this past November. The hearing was called for by Senate Judiciary Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT), who acknowledged that the federal government "must have a smarter approach to marijuana policy." Witnesses at Tuesday's hearing also included King County, Washington Sheriff John Urquhart - a vocal supporter of the state's new legalization law - and Jack Finlaw, Chief Legal Council for the Colorado Governor's Office. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Erik Altieri, NORML Communications Director, at (202) 483-5500. Archived video of the Senate Judiciary hearing is online at: <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/StateMar>.*

<continued from **DEA: MARIJUANA PLANT SEIZURES DECLINE TO LOWEST LEVELS IN NEARLY A DECADE**, page 1 > According to the DEA's 2012 Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Statistical Report, the total

number of cannabis plants eradicated nationwide fell 42 percent between 2011 and 2012. This continues a trend, as DEA crop seizures previously fell 35 percent nationwide from 2010 to 2011. In 2010, the DEA eliminated some 10.3 million cultivated pot plants. (This figure excludes the tens of millions of feral hemp plants which are typically seized and destroyed by DEA agents annually, but are no longer categorized in their reporting.) By 2011, this total had dipped to 6.7 million. For 2012, the most recent year for which DEA data is available, the total fell to 3.9 million - the lowest annual tally in nearly a decade.

The declining national figures are largely a result of reduced plant seizures in California. Coinciding largely with the downsizing of, and then ultimately the disbanding of, the state's nearly 30-year-old Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP) program, DEA-assisted marijuana seizures in California have fallen 73 percent since 2010 - from a near-record 7.4 million cultivated pot plants eradicated in 2010 to approximately 2 million in 2012.

DEA-assisted cannabis eradication efforts have remained largely unchanged in other states during this same period.



*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: [paul@norml.org](mailto:paul@norml.org). The DEA's 2012 Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Statistical Report is available online here:*

*<http://www.justice.gov/dea/ops/cannabis.shtml>*

<continued from **ANALYSIS: MARIJUANA POSSESSION OFFENDERS**, page 1 >

"As in past years, the so-called 'drug war' remains fueled by the arrests of minor marijuana possession offenders," NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said. "Cannabis prohibition financially burdens taxpayers, encroaches upon civil liberties, engenders disrespect for the law, impedes upon legitimate scientific research into the plant's medicinal properties, and disproportionately impacts communities of color. It is time for lawmakers and law enforcement to listen to the voters and to stop stigmatizing and criminalizing tens of millions of Americans for choosing to consume a substance that is safer than either tobacco or alcohol."

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<continued from previous page> Of those charged in 2011 with marijuana law violations, **658,231** (86 percent) were arrested for marijuana offenses involving possession only. The remaining **91,593** individuals were charged with "sale/manufacture," a category that includes virtually all cultivation offenses.

The arrest totals come at a time when numerous state and national polls indicate that strong majorities of American voters no longer support arresting or criminally prosecuting adults who possess or consume cannabis.



By region, the percentage of marijuana arrests was highest in the Midwest and in the South (52 percent and 51 percent of all illicit drug arrests respectively) and was lowest in the west, where cannabis violations comprised only 22 percent of total drug arrests.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

<continued from STUDY: CANNABIS CONSUMPTION PLAYS LITTLE ROLE IN GLOBAL DISEASE BURDEN, page 1 > in years of life lived with disability (YLDs), years of life lost (YLLs), and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).

Investigators reported that more people were likely to be dependent on opioids and amphetamines than on other controlled substances, and that overall, illicit drug use was responsible for 0.9 percent of DALYs worldwide. (Tobacco smoking was estimated to cause 6.3 percent of DALYs worldwide; alcohol was estimated to cause 3.9 percent.) By contrast, researchers reported that "regular cannabis use made a very small contribution to disease burden through its contribution as a risk factor for schizophrenia" - a link which was acknowledged to be "controversial" in an accompany commentary since existing research on the plant's potential association with the disease is not yet definitive.



In total, researchers estimated that 13.1 million people globally are dependent on cannabis,

including 1.8 million people in North America. Investigators estimated 15.5 million people worldwide were dependent on opioid drugs and 17.2 million were dependent on amphetamines.

Full text of the study, "Global burden of disease attributable to illicit drug use and dependence: findings from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010," appears in *The Lancet*.

<continued from 25 YEARS AGO: DEA'S OWN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE RULED CANNABIS SHOULD BE RECLASSIFIED UNDER FEDERAL LAW, page 1 >

The ruling, issued in 1988 by US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Chief Administrative Law Judge Francis Young "In the Matter of Marijuana Rescheduling," determined: "Marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man. By any measure of rational analysis marijuana can be safely used within a supervised routine of medical care."

Young continued: "It would be unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious for DEA to continue to stand between those sufferers and the benefits of this substance in light of the evidence in this record."

Judge Young concluded: "The administrative law judge recommends that the Administrator conclude that the marijuana plant considered as a whole has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, that there is no lack of accepted safety for use of it under medical supervision and that it may lawfully be transferred from Schedule I to Schedule II [of the federal Controlled Substances Act]."

Judge Young's ruling was in response to an administrative petition filed in 1972 by NORML which sought to reschedule cannabis under federal law. Federal authorities initially refused to accept the petition until mandated to do so by the US Court of Appeals in 1974, and then refused to properly process it until again ordered by the Court in 1982. In 1986, 14-years after NORML filed its initial petition, the DEA finally held public hearings on the issue before Judge Young, who rendered his decision two years later.



However, then-DEA Administrator John Lawn ultimately rejected Young's determination, and in 1994, the Court of Appeals allowed Lawn's reversal to stand

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In July 2011, the DEA rejected a separate marijuana rescheduling petition, initially filed in 2002. This past January, a three-judge panel for the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia affirmed the DEA's decision, ruling that insufficient clinical studies exist to warrant a judicial review of cannabis' federally prohibited status.

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.*

## Michigan: Most Voters Favor Eliminating Criminal Penalties For Marijuana Offenses

**Lansing, MI:** Nearly 80 percent of Michigan voters favor eliminating criminal penalties for marijuana offenses, according to survey data released by Epic-MRA Polling and commissioned by the Michigan state affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).

Forty-seven percent of respondents said that they backed legalizing marijuana "by taxing it and regulating it like alcohol." An additional 16 percent of respondents endorsed "replac[ing] criminal penalties for marijuana offenses with a fine" only. Another four percent of respondents supported an outright "repeal" of all state criminal penalties for cannabis offenses.



Only 26 percent of those polled said they supported continuing the present system of state criminal penalties for marijuana offenses. Under state law, the possession of marijuana for non-medical purposes is classified as a **criminal misdemeanor**, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

Six hundred likely voters participated in the survey, which has a margin of error of  $\pm 4$  percent.

Lansing voters will vote this fall on a municipal initiative repealing criminal and civil penalties involving the possession of cannabis by adults on private property. Last year, voters in four Michigan cities - Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, and Ypsilanti - all voted overwhelmingly in favor of municipal measures to depenalize marijuana offenses.

*Full text of the Epic-MRA poll is available online here: [http://www.epicmra.com/press/Stwd\\_Survey\\_Sept2013\\_Media\\_Freq.pdf](http://www.epicmra.com/press/Stwd_Survey_Sept2013_Media_Freq.pdf).*

## Michigan: Lansing Voters To Decide This Fall On Marijuana Legalization Ordinance

**Lansing, MI:** Lansing voters will decide this fall in favor of a municipal initiative repealing criminal and civil penalties involving the adult possession of cannabis by adults on private property.

Initiative proponents, Coalition for a Safer Lansing, collected some 7,000 signatures from registered voters to qualify the measure for the 2013 November ballot. The Lansing City Clerk's office certified the measure last week.



City Mayor Virg Bernero had previously spoken in favor of reforming the city's marijuana laws.

Last year, voters in four Michigan cities - Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, and Ypsilanti - all voted overwhelmingly in favor of municipal measures to depenalize marijuana offenses.

Voters in Portland, Maine will also vote on a similar citywide initiative this fall.

*For more information, please visit: <http://www.saferlansing.com/>.*

## Oklahoma: Majority Of Voters Endorse Marijuana Law Reform

**Oklahoma, City, OK:** A majority of likely Oklahoma voters back legalizing the use of medical marijuana and also support depenalizing pot possession penalties for recreational users, according to survey data released by SoonerPoll.com and commissioned by the Oklahoma state affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).



Seventy-one percent of respondents said that they support amending state law to allow for physician-authorized patients to consume cannabis for therapeutic purposes. Twenty states and Washington, DC, have enacted similar policies since 1996.

Oklahoma citizens also strongly backed amending state criminal laws that presently outlaw the plant's social use. Fifty-seven percent of respondents said that they preferred treating minor marijuana violations as a non-criminal, fine-only offense. Violators of such a policy would not be subject to arrest, face jail time, or receive a criminal record. Sixteen states already impose similar 'depenalization' policies. Two states, Colorado and Washington, have eliminated all criminal and civil penalties surrounding the possession of small quantities of marijuana by adults.

Finally, over 81 percent of Oklahoma respondents agreed that state lawmakers, not the federal government, ought to be the final arbiters to decide whether "[state] laws regarding whether the use of marijuana [are] legal or not."

Over 400 hundred likely voters participated in the statewide scientific poll, which possesses a margin of error of  $\pm 4.9$  percent. Oklahoma's marijuana penalties are among the most punitive in the county. Sales of any amount of cannabis are punishable by two years to life in prison. Subsequent minor marijuana possession offenses are punishable by two to ten years in prison. *For more information, please contact: <http://norml.org/chapters/ok>.*

## Louisiana: Voters Endorse Legalizing Cannabis

**Baton Rouge, LA:** A majority of state voters back legalizing and regulating the consumption of cannabis in a manner similar to alcohol, according to survey data released by the Public Policy Polling group and commissioned by the Louisiana branch of the American Civil Liberties union (ACLU).

Fifty-three percent of respondents endorsed regulating and taxing cannabis for those age 21 and older. Only 37 percent opposed the idea.



Sixty-five percent of respondents also expressed support for legalizing the use of cannabis for therapeutic purposes, while 56 percent of respondents approved of a policy replacing criminal penalties for minor marijuana offenders with fine-only citations.

Under present state law, first-time marijuana possession offenses are punishable by up to six months in jail while second offenses may be punished by up to five years incarceration.

This past summer, members of the state Senate narrowly defeated proposed legislation to reduce marijuana penalties for subsequent offenders.

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Erik Altieri, NORML Communications Director, at (202) 483-5500.*

## Report: Over 100,000 NYC Residents Could Benefit From Access To Medical Cannabis

**New York, NY:** More than 100,000 New York City residents suffering from serious medical conditions such as cancer and chronic pain could benefit from legal access to cannabis therapy, according to a report released last week by the New York City Comptroller's Office.

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The mission of the Comptroller's Office is to ensure the financial health of New York City by advising the Mayor, the City Council, and the public of the City's financial condition.

The report, entitled "100,000 Reasons: Medical Marijuana in the Big Apple," finds that some 8 out of 10 New Yorkers endorse permitting patient access to medical cannabis, and estimates that at least 100,000 City residents would immediately benefit from its legalization.

"[W]e believe this is a conservative estimate," authors of the report state, "because



registration for medical marijuana programs in the various states falls short of the potential. Patients experience social stigma and related social sanctions for using medical marijuana, and many doctors are not familiar with its benefits. Moreover, the federal government has created unnecessary obstacles for academic and research institutions to study marijuana, thereby impeding research that could lead to a broader use of medical marijuana."

The report endorses various legal and legislative efforts to amend state and federal marijuana laws. Locally, the report's authors recommend that New York City establish a 'Medical Cannabis Research Fund' to engage in clinical study of the plant; they further propose the establishment of cannabis grow operations at selected public hospitals. The report also recommends that health insurance providers be required to cover some costs related to medical cannabis expenses.

"In the 1980s, New York State acknowledged marijuana's medicinal value and supported research for chemotherapy patients," the report concludes. "By following the recommendations outlined in this report, we can hit the ground running where we left off just 30 years ago and make a meaningful impact for New Yorkers suffering today and for years to come."

The Comptroller's Office had previously issued a report estimating that regulating and taxing

marijuana for New York City residents age 21 and over would yield an estimated \$431 million in annual savings and revenue.

Full text of the report is available online at: [http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/RegMarij\\_Summary\\_8-29b.pdf](http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/RegMarij_Summary_8-29b.pdf).

## New Jersey: Governor Signs Legislation Amending Aspects Of State's Medical Cannabis Program

**Trenton, NJ:** Republican Gov. Chris Christie has signed legislation, Senate Bill 2842, into law modifying aspects of the state's medical marijuana regulations.

Specifically, the law amends requirements that state-licensed medical cannabis producers and distributors be limited to providing patients with no more than three strains of the plant – a regulatory rule that has been in place since the program's inception some three years ago.



Proponents of the rule change argued that lifting the three-strain cap will foster the production and distribution of varieties of cannabis high in CBD (cannabidiol) content. Cannabidiol is a non-psychoactive cannabinoid that possesses a variety of therapeutic properties.

However, it is typically present only at low levels in conventional strains of marijuana, which typically are bred to possess higher quantities of THC – the primary psychoactive ingredient in cannabis.

Senate Bill 2842 also allows for cannabis distributors to produce marijuana-infused edible products. However, at the insistence of the Governor, consumption of such products will be limited to those aged under 18.

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News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

<continued from NEW JERSEY: GOVERNOR SIGNS LEGISLATION AMENDING ASPECTS OF STATE'S MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM, previous page> The Governor previously vetoed language that sought to streamline regulations so that qualified patients under the age of 18 could more readily access medicinal cannabis.

Under present New Jersey law, authorized patients may only obtain medical cannabis from state-licensed dispensaries. To date, however, few facilities are actively up and running. Earlier this month, the state's Economic Developmental Authority approved a \$375,000 loan to the Compassionate Care Foundation dispensary, which plans to open its doors in mid-October.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director or Erik Altieri, NORML Communications Director, at (202) 483-5500.

## THC Increases Brain Activity In Response To Positive Stimuli

**London, United Kingdom:** The administration of THC, the primary psychoactive component in cannabis, modulates emotional processing in healthy volunteers, according to placebo-controlled crossover trial data published online by the journal *European Neuropsychopharmacology*.

Investigators from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands performed functional magnetic resonance



imaging (fMRI) on 11 healthy male subjects. Following the administration of THC or placebo, researchers assessed subjects' brain activity during their exposure to stimuli with a negative ('fearful faces') content or a positive content ('happy faces').

They hypothesized that THC administration would reduce subjects' negative bias in emotional processing and shift it towards a positive bias. A bias toward negative stimuli has been linked to diagnoses of certain mental illnesses such as depression.

As anticipated, authors reported reduced brain activity after THC administration when subjects' processed stimuli with a negative emotional content. Conversely, researchers reported increased brain activity following THC administration when subjects' processed stimuli with a positive emotional content.

They concluded: "These results indicate that THC administration reduces the negative bias in emotional processing. This adds human evidence to support the hypothesis that the endocannabinoid system is involved in modulation of emotional processing.

Our findings also suggest a possible role for the endocannabinoid system in abnormal emotional processing, and may thus be relevant for psychiatric disorders such as major depression."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

Full text of the study, "The endocannabinoid system and emotional processing: A pharmacological fMRI study with  $\Delta^9$ -tetrahydrocannabinol," will appear in *European Neuropsychopharmacology*.