



## Regulation Works! It's Time for a New Approach to Marijuana

**H.B. 1580 will create thousands of new jobs and bring in millions in tax revenue.** Based on the experience in Colorado, a state with a smaller population than Maryland, our state can expect to bring in well over \$72 million in annual tax revenue once the retail cannabis (marijuana) stores are up and running. The CONTRoL (Cannabis Oversight and Nondiscrimination Through Taxation, Regulation, and Legalization) Act will also create thousands of good, middle-class jobs for Marylanders, including cultivators, packagers, retailers, and lab technicians; Colorado has seen nearly 27,000 new jobs directly, as well as more work for people in related occupations like construction, security, and health research.

**Regulation takes cannabis sales out of schools and off the streets.** Unlike licensed businesses selling liquor or tobacco, sellers of cannabis are pushed underground and operate virtually anywhere. H.B. 1580 would move sales into a safe, licensed retail store where workers check ID. No one under 21 will be allowed in cannabis stores, which cannot be located within 300 feet of schools, and products cannot be advertised to appeal to minors.

**Cannabis is safer than alcohol.** The Institute of Medicine has deemed marijuana far less addictive than alcohol or tobacco. Unlike alcohol, cannabis has never caused a fatal overdose and is not associated with violent crime and domestic violence. Adults should be able to make the safer choice.

**Prohibition makes control impossible.** Prohibition guarantees marijuana can't undergo quality control inspections for purity and potency, creating possible health hazards as a result of contamination by pesticides, fertilizers, molds, bacteria, or the lacing of cannabis with other drugs. Under the CONTRoL Act, marijuana will be sold by strictly regulated retailers, and labs will test cannabis for potency and to ensure it isn't contaminated. Cannabis will be sold with a safety insert explaining potential dangers and how to recognize problematic use.

**Regulations and public education work.** Strict regulations on cigarette sales and advertising and a robust public education campaign have been incredibly successful at reducing teens' tobacco use. Since 2000, daily tobacco use among high schooler seniors has plummeted from 20.6% to 5.5% according to Monitoring the Future data. Regulation and education can also work to reduce teens' cannabis use.

**Prohibition keeps cannabis in the underground market, while regulation will fund treatment and other important services.** While marijuana prohibition ensures profits go untaxed, the CONTRoL Act will generate tens of millions of dollars for the public good. After the costs of regulation are covered, 40% of revenue will go to prevention, education, treatment, and recovery support for addiction to alcohol, gambling, cannabis, and other drugs. Lt. Gov. Rutherford is leading a state task force that has called for massive amounts of additional funding for heroin treatment, but is "not sure how we're going to fund this." The funding from the bill's 20% tax on cannabis sales would enable many individuals to get the help they need.

**Arresting, citing, and prosecuting marijuana offenders diverts police time from serious crime.** Last year, the Baltimore City Police Department only solved 31% of murders, and in 2013 only 54% of murders were solved state-wide, one of the worst rates in the country. Ending prohibition will provide more time and resources for investigating and solving violent crimes.

**Regulation will reduce violence.** While research shows that cannabis use doesn't cause violence, the same cannot be said for prohibition. As with alcohol prohibition in the 1920s, since drug-related disputes can't be solved lawfully, violence is inevitable. As a result, individual cannabis users face dangers due to prohibition.