



## California Assemblyman Introduces Measure To Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol

### **Proposal Will Raise Over \$1.3 Billion Per Year, State's Tax Collection Agency Says**

**San Francisco, CA, USA:** State Assemblyman Tom Ammiano (D-San Francisco) introduced legislation this week to legalize and regulate the commercial production and sale of cannabis for adults age 21 or over. The proposal – Assembly Bill 390: The Marijuana Control, Regulation and Education Act – is the first bill ever to be introduced in the California legislature that seeks to tax and control the sale of cannabis.

Ammiano introduced AB 390 at a press conference Monday. Joining the assemblyman in support of the measure were Betty Yee, Chairwoman of the California Board of Equalization (Taxation), Oakland City Council member Rebecca Kaplan,

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### **Marijuana May Be Protective Against Injury, Study Says**

**Lausanne, Switzerland:** The use of cannabis is not a contributing causal factor in injuries requiring hospitalization, and may even protect users against the likelihood of sustaining such injuries, according to the results of case-control study published online in the journal *BMC Public Health*.

Investigators at the Lausanne University Hospital in Switzerland assessed the association between the use of cannabis and/or alcohol and the risk of injury among 486 patients aged 16 and older.

Investigators reported: "Alcohol use in the six hours prior to injury was associated with [an elevated] relative risk compared with no alcohol use. Cannabis use was inversely related to risk of injury."

Researchers also analyzed  
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### **NORML Responds To Latest Marijuana And Cancer Fears**

**Seattle, WA, USA:** The results of a recent Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research study reporting that heavy, long-term cannabis use is associated with an elevated risk of a rare form of testicular cancer are preliminary and should be interpreted cautiously, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said today.

The widely reported study, published online on the website of the journal *Cancer*, assessed the relative risk of testicular germ cell tumors (TGCTs) in 369 men and 979 age-matched controls. Of the 369 cases, 268 reported having smoked cannabis and 97 were current users.

Investigators did *not* find a statistically significant risk among men diagnosed with TGCT who had "ever used" compared to healthy controls. By contrast, authors did

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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)**

Today Willamette Valley NORML joins 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!**

<continued from MEASURE TO REGULATE MARIJUANA, page 1 > Orange County Superior Court Judge James P. Gray (retired), and Dale Gieringer, Coordinator of California NORML, which provided legislative text and financial analysis for the bill.

"With the state in the midst of an historic economic crisis, the move toward regulating and taxing marijuana is simply common sense," Ammiano said. "This legislation would generate much needed revenue for the state, restrict access to only those over 21, end the environmental damage to our public lands from illicit crops, and improve public safety by redirecting law enforcement efforts to more serious crimes. California has the opportunity to be the first state in the nation to enact a smart, responsible public policy for the control and regulation of marijuana."

Local news anchors from CBS, ABC, NBC, and PBS television covered the press conference. National stories regarding Ammiano's bill have appeared in *USA Today*, as well as on Air America and CNN.

As introduced, AB 390 would raise over \$1.3 billion in annual revenue by taxing the retail production and sale of marijuana, according to financial estimates provided by the California Board of Equalization. An economic analysis by California NORML estimates that a legal, statewide retail market for cannabis could generate additional revenues totaling some \$12 to \$18 billion dollars per year.

The noncommercial cultivation of marijuana for personal use – defined as ten plants or fewer – would not be subject to taxation under the proposal. In addition, AB 390 would not alter existing legislation on the use of medicinal cannabis, nor would it impose new taxes or sanctions on the medical cultivation of cannabis.

A recent Zogby poll of 1,053 likely voters, commissioned by California NORML and Oaksterdam University, reported that nearly six out of ten respondents on the west coast favor

taxing and legally regulating cannabis like alcohol.

"This bill is a winning proposition for California taxpayers," Gieringer said. "It's time that California stops wasting resources trying to enforce marijuana prohibition, and instead realizes the tax benefits derived from a legal, regulated cannabis market."

*For more information, please contact Dale Gieringer, California NORML Coordinator, at (415) 563-5858, or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Additional information on AB 390, as well as contact information for the California Assembly, is available at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=12758896>.*

### **Zogby Poll: Nearly Six Out Of Ten West Coast Voters Support Taxing And Regulating Marijuana Like Alcohol - National Support For Pot Legalization Grows To 44 Percent**

**San Francisco, CA, USA:** A majority of west coast voters support regulating the sale of marijuana in a manner similar to alcohol, according to national poll of 1,053 likely voters by Zogby International and commissioned by California NORML and Oaksterdam University.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents residing on the west coast agree that cannabis should be "taxed and legally regulated like alcohol and cigarettes." Only thirty-six percent of west coast respondents oppose regulating the sale of marijuana for adults.

Nationally, support for taxing and regulating cannabis stands at 44 percent. Among likely voters on the east coast, 48 percent endorse legalizing marijuana. Respondents' support fell to approximately 37 percent in the southern and central regions of the United States.

In January, a national CBS/*New York Times* poll reported that 41 percent of Americans

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Responding to the latest Zogby poll, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said, "Public support for replacing the illicit marijuana market with a legally regulated, controlled market similar to alcohol, complete with age restrictions and quality controls, continues to grow, and appears to have achieved majority support on the west coast – where many voters are already familiar with the state-licensed use and, in some cases, sale of medical cannabis."

He added, "As voters and legislators continue to look for alternative ways to raise tax revenue for public services and reduce law enforcement costs in this troubled economy, we expect the public's support for taxing and regulating cannabis to continue to grow -- not just on the west coast, but nationwide."

Nationally, younger voters age 18 to 29 are most likely (55 percent) to support regulating pot. Older voters age 50 to 64 are nearly evenly divided (48 percent) in their support for legalization.

The poll found that a majority of registered Democrat voters (53 percent) back taxing cannabis, versus only 32 percent of Republicans.

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Dale Gieringer, California NORML Coordinator, at (415) 563-5858.*

<continued from MARIJUANA MAY BE PROTECTIVE, page 1 > subjects' drug use for the time period exactly one week prior to the patients' hospitalization. They reported, "More patients reported alcohol use in the six-hour period prior to injury (case period) than in the corresponding six-hour period the previous week (control period). ... For cannabis, fewer people reported use prior to injury (case period) than in the control period."

Despite the study's relatively small sample size,

investigators concluded: "The results for cannabis use were quite surprising. ... The present study in fact indicated a 'protective effect' of cannabis use in a dose-response relationship."

Commenting on the study's results, authors speculated that "cannabis is consumed in relatively safer, low risk environments" (e.g., at home) compared to alcohol, which is often consumed at bars or prior to going out in public.

A **prior case-control study** conducted by the University of Missouri also reported an inverse relationship between marijuana use and injury risk, finding, "Self-reported marijuana use in the previous seven days was associated ... with a substantially decreased risk of injury."

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Alcohol and cannabis use as risk factors for injury – a case-crossover analysis in a Swiss hospital emergency department," is available online from BMC Public Health at: www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/9/40.*

<continued from NORML RESPONDS, page 1 > observe an elevated risk of cancer among men who were current weekly use of cannabis, particularly if their use began before eighteen years of age.

Researchers said that this observed association was specific to nonseminoma tumors, a less common type of testicular cancer. Overall, nonseminomas account for fewer than one half of one percent of all cancers among American men.

Investigators cautioned that their findings are preliminary, and argued that "additional studies of TGCTs will be needed to test this hypothesis."

They also acknowledged that incidences of nonseminomas have not risen in the general

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Previous studies have generally failed to find a causal association between marijuana use and cancer. Most recently, a UCLA study of more than 2,200 subjects (1,212 cases and 1,040 controls) reported that marijuana smoking was not positively associated with cancers of the lung or upper aerodigestive tract – even among individuals who reported smoking more than 22,000 joints during their lifetime.

A 1997 Kaiser Permanente retrospective cohort study examining the relationship of marijuana use and cancer incidence in 65,171 men and women in California found that cannabis use was not associated with increased risks of developing tobacco-use related cancers – including lung cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, or melanoma.

Commenting on this latest study, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said: "Advocates for marijuana law reform have never claimed that cannabis is a harmless substance. This premise is neither accurate, nor is it the standard society uses – or should use – to determine the licit or illicit nature of controlled substances. Many substances have links to cancer, including tobacco, alcohol, and caffeine. In all three cases, the public's understanding of these risks has led consumers to voluntarily reduce their intake of these products. By contrast, the acknowledgement of these potential risks has not led to a criminal ban on the use of these substances, nor should it.

"In short, if scientists confirm these preliminary findings in a larger, population-based study, then groups like NORML and others that represent the cannabis using community will no doubt be among the first to alert their constituency. Nevertheless, even if these potential risks are substantiated, it remains true that by any objective scientific measure cannabis remains safer – both to the user and to the public – than the use of alcohol or tobacco."

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Association of marijuana use and the incidence of testicular germ cell tumors," will appear in the March 15 issue of Cancer. Additional information of marijuana use and cancer risk is available in the NORML white paper, Cannabis Smoke and Cancer: Assessing the Risk," available online at: [http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=6891](http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6891).*

## **Congressman Introduces Bill Criminalizing Products Designed To "Defraud" Drug Tests**

**Washington, DC, USA:** Congressman Eliot Engel (D-NY), along with Reps. Peter Defazio (D-OR), Jean Schmidt (R-OH) and Lee Terry (R-NE), has introduced legislation in Congress to criminalize the production and sale of any commercial products intended to influence drug test results, such as diuretic teas or chemical adulterants. The bill, H.R. 858, is now before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

As introduced, the proposal would "prohibit the manufacture, marketing, sale, or shipment in interstate commerce of products designed ... to produce a false or misleading outcome of a test for the presence of a controlled substance."

More than a dozen states have enacted similar laws.

Of the tens of millions of workplace drug tests performed annually in the United States, an estimated 90 percent are urine tests, which may be influenced by dilution or adding an adulterant to the sample. Over the past decade, numerous commercial businesses have marketed commercial products promising to influence drug test results, including herbal

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<continued from previous page> teas and substitute urine. *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.*

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## **NORML Comments On Obama's Rumored Drug Czar Pick - Calls Kerlikowske a "step in the right direction" and a "clean break" from his predecessors**

**Washington, DC, USA:** NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said today that the President's apparent pick for the position of White House 'Drug Czar,' Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske, "is a step in the right direction" and represents a "clean break" from the 'do drugs, do time' mentality of previous directors.

Stated Armentano: "On the positive side, Kerlikowske hails from Seattle — a city that has elected to make the enforcement marijuana crimes cops' lowest priority. And although the police chief spoke out against the initiative effort — which passed with 58 percent of the vote in 2003 — he's abided by the will of the people since then. Consequently, there are now fewer marijuana-related arrests in Seattle than in virtually any other major city in the United States.

"On the potentially negative side, Kerlikowske is first and foremost a cop. He's served 36 years in law enforcement, and it is foolish to assume that he will embrace our issue with open arms. That said, NORML is cautiously optimistic that Kerlikowske may bring a progressive approach to an agency that has, almost since its inception, operated in the 'Dark Ages.'"

Armentano concluded: "The day the U.S. government finally — and properly — recognizes that drug use is a public health problem and not solely a criminal justice issue will be the day that the President appoints a White House 'Drug Czar' who possesses a professional background in public health, addiction, and treatment rather than in law

enforcement. "But until that day arrives, perhaps the best we reformers can hope for is a cop who appreciates that pot poses less of a danger to the public than alcohol, and who recognizes that from a practical and fiscal standpoint, targeting and arresting adults who engage in the responsible use of cannabis doesn't really make a whole lot of sense. At first glance, Obama's pick — unlike his predecessor John Walters — appears to possess both of these common sense qualities."

*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.*

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## **NORML Responds To Phelp's Pot-Smoking Controversy**

**Washington, DC, USA:** Olympic gold medalist Michael Phelps and tens of millions of other successful Americans have smoked marijuana; America's laws should reflect this fact not deny it, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano wrote on The Hill.com's influential Congress blog this week.

*The Hill* is a popular Washington, DC publication that is widely read by members of Congress and their staff.

Armentano writes: Sure, there will be some who will say that this latest chapter in Phelp's life is deserving of criticism because the 14-time gold medalist is sending a poor message to young children. And what message would that be? That you can occasionally smoke marijuana and still be successful in life. Well sorry if the truth hurts."

Earlier this week, Phelps acknowledged that he used marijuana while attending a college party in November. A photograph of Phelps smoking cannabis at the party appeared in a British tabloid on Sunday.

To date, more than 200 readers have posted feedback to NORML's commentary, making it one of the most commented on essays in Hill.com history.

*Full text of Armentano's editorial, Why condemn Phelps when we ought to condemn the laws that brand him a criminal," is available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/b2aqq3>.*

## **Zogby Poll: Three Out Of Four Voters Oppose DEA's Medical Marijuana Raids -- Agency Continues To Bust State-Authorized Pot Dispensaries Despite President's Promise To End Federal Raids**

### ***DEA Seizes Cannabis, Cash At Four California Facilities During The Week***

**Los Angeles, CA, USA:** Nearly three out of four American voters say that President Barack Obama should uphold his campaign pledge to halt federal intervention in states that allow for the use and distribution of medical marijuana by authorized patients, according to a national poll of 1,053 likely voters by Zogby International and commissioned by the NORML Foundation.

Seventy-two percent of respondents said that President Obama should "stop federal raids against medical marijuana providers in the 13 states where medical marijuana has become legal." Only 21 percent of respondents said that he should continue the raids.

While campaigning for the presidency, Obama pledged not to use Justice Department resources to try and circumvent state (medical marijuana) laws."

Since President Obama took office two weeks ago, the US Drug Enforcement Administration has undertaken at least seven separate raids of state-authorized medical marijuana providers in California and Colorado. On Wednesday, DEA officials, acting without the cooperation of state or local law enforcement agencies, served federal search warrants on at least four Los Angeles based medical marijuana collectives. Agents seized medicine, cash, financial records, and computers, but did not make any arrests.

California NORML Coordinator Dale Gieringer called the DEA's most recent raids legalized piracy."

Several national news outlets, including the *Los Angeles Times*, denounced the DEA's actions.

Commenting on the results of the Zogby poll, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said, 'Seventy-two percent of the American public has said 'enough is enough.' They want to see an end to the DEA's callous and unscrupulous conduct in California and in the other twelve states that have legalized the medicinal use of cannabis. President Obama, it is

time for you to keep your word and to bring an end to DEA's morally bankrupt behavior."

This may well be happening, because in today's *Washington Times* White House spokesman Nick Shapiro said, The president believes that federal resources should not be used to circumvent state laws, and as he continues to appoint senior leadership to fill out the ranks of the federal government, he expects them to review their policies with that in mind."

Zogby conducted the poll on January 29-31, 2009. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500, or Dale Gieringer, California NORML Coordinator, at (415) 563-5858. Additional information is available online at: <http://www.canorml.org> or <http://www.canorml.org/news/obamaraid.html>.*

## **Montana: Senate Votes To Expand State's Medical Marijuana Law**

**Helena, MT, USA:** Members of the state Senate voted Tuesday 28 to 22 in favor of Senate Bill 326, an act to expand the state's four-year-old medical marijuana law.

As introduced, SB 326 would: expand the number of qualifying conditions for which cannabis may be legally recommended; increase the amount of marijuana a patient may legally possess; and prohibit employers and landlords from discriminating against medicinal marijuana patients solely because of their medical status.

The proposal now goes before the state House of Representatives, which is expected to take action on the bill in March.

Some 2,000 patients are registered with the Montana Department of Health to use cannabis medically. *For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: [paul@norml.org](mailto:paul@norml.org) or Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500. Additional information about this bill is available by visiting Montana Patients and Families United at: <http://www.mtmjpatients.org>. Contact information for the Montana House of Representatives is available at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=12758941>.*



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

## **New Jersey: Senate Votes To Authorize Physician-Supervised Use Of Marijuana**

**Trenton, NJ, USA:** Members of the state Senate voted Monday 22 to 16 in favor of SB 119, the New Jersey Compassionate Use Medical Marijuana Act.

The measure would permit authorized patients and state-licensed "alternative treatment centers" to use and legally produce cannabis under state law. If enacted, New Jersey would become the fourteenth state to allow for the state-authorized use of medical marijuana.

Members of the state Assembly must vote on a companion measure, Assembly Bill 804, before the proposal can go before the Governor.

On Wednesday, New Jersey Democrat Governor Jon S. Corzine reiterated his support for the bill, saying that he would "absolutely" sign the measure into law if it is approved by the state assembly.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: [paul@norml.org](mailto:paul@norml.org) or Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500. Additional information about this bill is available by visiting NORML New Jersey at: <http://www.normlnj.org> or The Coalition for Medical Marijuana – New Jersey at: <http://www.cmmnj.org>. Contact information for the New Jersey Assembly is available at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=12767456>.*

## **Voting Happens Online For The Winner Of NORML's \$10,000 Ad Contest**

**Washington, DC, USA:** NORML's staff and members of its Board of Directors have selected 25 finalists in this year's NORML ad contest: What

**\* NOTE! The Willamette Valley NORML Public meeting \* Happens every 4th Sat. of the month and will be at h'ERB'S Toasted Subs, 1210 Willamette St, Eugene call: 541.517-0957 -or- visit: <http://WillametteValleyNORML.org>**



*It's One Hell of A Joint!*

Visit - <http://herbstoastedsubs.com/> - and see!

Should Obama Do About Pot?" Online voting was available for this third annual NORML ad challenge. The grand prize winner, as selected by the public, will receive a \$3,500 award, and will have their ad featured on local cable television. Runners up will receive cash prize rewards.

Commenting on the contest, NORML Executive Director said: This year's NORML ad challenge has been a smashing success. NORML received more entries, and a greater variety of entries, than ever before. To date, over 100,000 people have viewed NORML's videos on websites like youtube.com – enabling us to make our message available to tens of thousands of viewers who might not otherwise be aware of the growing movement to reform America's archaic and punitive marijuana laws."

Online voting ended at midnight (PST) on Sunday, February 8, 2009. *To view vote results for this year's contest, please visit: <http://www.norml.org>.*

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