



2009: The Year In Review – NORML's Top 10 Events That Shaped Marijuana Policy

#1 Obama Administration: Don't Focus On Medical Marijuana Prosecutions.

United States Deputy Attorney General David Ogden issued a memorandum to federal prosecutors in October directing them to not "focus federal resources ... on individuals whose actions are in clear and unambiguous compliance with existing state laws providing for the medical use of marijuana." The directive upheld a campaign promise by President Barack Obama, who had previously pledged that he was "not going to be using Justice Department resources to try to circumvent state laws on this issue." *Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7998.*

#2 Public Support For Legalizing Pot Hits All-Time High.

A majority of likely voters now support legalizing marijuana, according to a national poll of 1,004 likely voters published in December by Angus Reid.

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California: Voters Will Decide On Marijuana Regulation Measure in 2010, Proponents Say

Oakland, CA, USA: Proponents of a statewide ballot initiative to legalize marijuana use in California told the *Los Angeles Times* this week that they have gathered the sufficient number of signatures to place the measure on the November 2010 ballot.

Sponsored by Oaksterdam University, the Regulate, Control, and Tax Cannabis Act of 2010 seeks to allow California counties to regulate the possession, use, production, and sale of non-commercial quantities of marijuana for those age 21 years or older. The measure would not alter the state's existing medical marijuana laws.

Petitioners reported that they have collected over 680,000 signatures, 57 percent more than the estimated 434,000 needed to qualify for the ballot.

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Marijuana Users Substitute Pot In Place Of More Dangerous Substances, Study Says

Berkeley, CA, USA: Cannabis is often substituted in place of the use of other illicit drugs, alcohol, or prescription medications, according to survey data published in the *Harm Reduction Journal*.

Investigator Amanda Reiman of the University of California, Berkeley School of Social Welfare, surveyed 350 members of the Berkeley Patients Group, a city-licensed medical marijuana dispensary. Seventy-one percent of those surveyed reported suffering from a chronic medical condition, 52 percent reported using cannabis for pain relief, and 75 percent reported using cannabis for a mental health-related issue. Respondents ranged from age 18 to 81.

The study found that 66 percent of respondents said that they used cannabis as a replacement for prescription

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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**

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 TOP TEN STORIES of 2009, page 1 >
The Angus Reid Public Opinion poll results echo those of separate national polls conducted this year by Gallup, Zogby, ABC News, CBS News, Rasmussen Reports, and the California Field Poll each of which reported greater public support for marijuana legalization than ever before. *Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8054.*

#3 Lifetime Marijuana Use Associated With Reduced Cancer Risk. The moderate long-term use of cannabis is associated with a reduced risk of head and neck cancer, according to the results of a population-based control study published in August by the journal *Cancer Prevention Research*. Authors reported, "After adjusting for potential confounders (including smoking and alcohol drinking), 10 to 20 years of marijuana use was associated with a significantly reduced risk of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma." *Read the full story: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7944.*

#4 AMA Calls For Review Of Marijuana's Prohibitive Status. In November, the American Medical Association resolved that marijuana should longer be classified as a Schedule I prohibited substance. Drugs classified in Schedule I are defined as possessing "no currently accepted use in treatment in the United States." In a separate action, the AMA also determined, "Results of short term controlled trials indicate that smoked cannabis reduces neuropathic pain, improves appetite and caloric intake especially in patients with reduced muscle mass, and may relieve spasticity and pain in patients with multiple sclerosis." *Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8020.*

#5 California: Lawmakers Hold Historic Hearing On Marijuana Legalization. State lawmakers heard testimony in October in support of taxing and regulating the commercial production and distribution of cannabis for adults age 21 and older. Additional hearings, as well as a vote on Assembly Bill 390: the Marijuana Control, Regulation, and Education Act, are scheduled for January 2010. *Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8002.*

#6 Maine Voters Approve Medical Marijuana Dispensaries Measure; Dispensaries Coming To Washington, DC In 2010. Voters in November decided in favor of a statewide measure that allows for the state to license non-profit facilities to distribute medical cannabis to qualified patients. The vote marked the first time that citizens ever approved a statewide ballot proposal authorizing the creation of dispensaries. In June, Rhode Island lawmakers enacted a similar measure. In December, Congress lifted federal restrictions to allow for the DC City Council to implement provisions of a ten-year-old medical marijuana law that would allow for the use and distribution of medicinal cannabis in the District of Columbia. *Read the full story: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8011.*

#7 Oakland: Voters Approve First-In-The-Nation Medical Marijuana Business Tax. In July 80 percent of municipal voters approved Ballot Measure F, the nation's first ever business tax on the retail sales of cannabis. The tax, which takes effect on January 1, imposes an exclusive tax for "cannabis businesses" of \$18 for every \$1,000 of gross receipts. *Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7937.*

#8 Rasmussen Poll: Majority Of Americans Say Marijuana Is Safer Than Alcohol. More than half of American adults believe that alcohol is "more dangerous" than marijuana, according to the results of a national telephone poll of 1,000 likely voters published in September by Rasmussen Reports. Fifty-one percent of respondents, including a majority of women, rated the use of marijuana to be less dangerous than alcohol. Only 19 percent of those polled said that cannabis is the more dangerous of the two substances. *Read more: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7965.*

#9 Many Teens See Medical Cannabis As Alternative Treatment Option. Some one-third of adolescents view their use of marijuana as therapeutic rather than recreational, according to survey data published in May by the journal *Substance Abuse, Treatment, Prevention and Policy*.

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<continued from previous page> Teens most commonly reported using cannabis therapeutically to counter symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), physical pain, and sleeplessness. In November several mainstream media outlets, including *The New York Times* and *Good Morning America*, featured stories on adolescents using marijuana as a medicine. Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7864.

#10 Oregon NORML Opens 'Cannabis Café,' Media Frenzy Follows. In November Oregon NORML opened the state's first café catering to state-authorized medical marijuana patients. Unlike conventional marijuana dispensaries that operate in states like California and Colorado, medical cannabis is not sold on the premises, nor is the primary function of the café to dispense marijuana. "This is not a medical marijuana dispensary with a café; this is a café for medical marijuana patients," said Madeline Martinez, Oregon NORML Executive Director. *The Associated Press, Reuters, USA Today, The New York Times*, and *Democracy Now* were among the hundreds of media outlets that covered the story. Read the full story at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8024.

<continued from CALIFORNIA MARIJUANA REGULATION, page 1 > Supporters are expected to turn over their signatures to the Secretary of State's office for verification in February.

In April, a California Field Poll reported that 56 percent of California voters supported taxing and regulating the recreational adult use and sale of marijuana. Last week a nationwide Angus Reid Public Opinion Poll of 1,004 adults found that 53 percent of Americans, including over 60 percent of registered Democrats, support legalizing cannabis.

A legislative bill in the California Assembly, AB 390 – the Marijuana Control, Regulation, and Education Act – is scheduled to be voted on by the Assembly Committee on Public Safety on Tuesday, January 12, 2010. If approved, the measure is expected to be acted on by the State Assembly Committee on Health later that same day.

For more information on CALIFORNIA MARIJUANA REGULATION, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or visit: <http://www.taxcannabis.org>

Support For Marijuana Legalization Continues To Grow In The United States -- National Survey Indicates Majority Support

San Francisco, CA, USA: A decade-long increase in public support to legalize marijuana would appear affirmed according to a newly released poll by AngusReid Public Opinion.

In a national survey of 1,004 American adults, 53 percent support legalizing marijuana. This survey comports with a recent Zogby poll indicating over 50 percent support, as well as a Field Poll in California earlier this year that indicated 56 percent support for marijuana legalization in California.

The AngusReid poll also found that 68 percent of the American public believe the 'War on Drugs' to be a failure, 8 percent believe it a success; with less than 10 percent support, Americans do not support legalizing so-called 'hard' drugs such as ecstasy, cocaine, heroin or methamphetamine.

Two other notable and consistent demographic trends are highlighted:

- Democrats and Independent voters support reform, 61 percent and 55 percent respectively, whereas only 43 percent of Republican voters support legalization
- The South and Midwest are not as supportive for marijuana legalization as the West and Northeast

"Whether it is these tough economic times, the ascension of more marijuana-friendly baby-boomers into positions of power and authority or the commonsense recognition that 73-years of marijuana prohibition needs to be replaced with a functional tax and control model, it would appear that an ever-growing majority of Americans want major marijuana law reforms

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<continued from previous page> — including legalization", said NORML executive director Allen St. Pierre. To view the AngusReid Public Opinion Survey data and cross-tabulations, see: http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/2009.12.09_Drugs_US.pdf To view a NORML composite graph of the numerous marijuana legalization surveys and the upward trend since 1995, see: <http://stash.norml.org/wp-content/uploads/pollDec09.png>

Rhode Island: Legislative Task Force To Reevaluate Marijuana Prohibition

Providence, Rhode Island, USA: A legislative task force has convened to evaluate whether to reduce statewide criminal penalties regarding the personal possession and use of marijuana.

The nine-member panel, led by Democrat Senator Joshua Miller, is expected to assess the fiscal and social costs of present law and consider legislative alternatives.

The task force is expected to make their recommendations to the Rhode Island legislature by the end of January.

Under state law, the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail. The sale or cultivation of marijuana is classified as a felony offense, punishable by up to 30 years in prison.

In 2006, state lawmakers approved legislation allowing for the medicinal use of cannabis by state-authorized patients. In June, the legislature mandated the Department of Health to adopt regulations regarding the non-profit production and distribution of medical marijuana. Those rules are expected to take effect next year. For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Deputy Director, at (202) 483-5500.

<continued from POT IN PLACE OF MORE DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES, page 1 > drugs, and 57 percent said that marijuana provided better relief for their symptoms than conventional medications. Forty

percent of respondents said that they used marijuana as a substitute for alcohol. Twenty-six percent said that they used marijuana to replace their former use of more potent illegal drugs.

Of those who reported using pot in place of alcohol, 65 percent said that they did so because it has less adverse side effects than alcohol. The study concludes: The substitution of one psychoactive substance for another with the goal of reducing negative outcomes can be included within the framework of harm reduction. Medical cannabis patients have been engaging in substitution by using cannabis as an alternative to alcohol, prescription, and illicit drugs.

Survey data published online in September in the journal Drug and Alcohol Dependence reported that marijuana abstinence is associated with an increase in alcohol use among both infrequent and heavy drinkers.

Commenting on the most recent survey results, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano, co-author of the book *Marijuana Is Safer: So Why Are We Driving People to Drink*, said: "Rather than being a so-called gateway drug, marijuana is a terminus that enables users to reduce or eliminate their use of more harmful substances, including other illicit drugs, certain prescription medications, and especially alcohol. It makes little sense for our laws to criminalize the use and possession of the less harmful substance."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, Executive Director of NORML, at (202) 483-5500, or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, 'Cannabis as a substitute for alcohol and other drugs' appears online on the website of the Harm Reduction Journal.

Marijuana More Popular Than Cigarettes Among Teens, Study Says

Ann Arbor, MI, USA: Teens are more likely to admit having used marijuana in the past months than they are cigarettes, according to federal survey data released this week.

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<continued from previous page> Investigators at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor reported that a greater percentage of 12th and 10th graders said they used cannabis in the previous month than smoked cigarettes. Past-month use of cigarettes and marijuana among 8th graders was nearly equal.

According to the survey, cigarettes use among young people has fallen dramatically since the mid-1990s, dropping to its lowest levels since 1975 – when investigators first began tracking its use. Monthly use of marijuana by young people has remained at roughly the same levels since the mid-1990s.

Commenting on the survey data, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said: "There's a lesson to be learned here. Over the past 40 years tens of millions of Americans have voluntarily quit smoking a legal, yet highly addictive intoxicant. Many others, especially young people, have refused to initiate the habit. And they've all made this decision without ever once being threatened with criminal prosecution and arrest, imprisonment, probation, or drug testing."

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

Moderate Marijuana Use Not Associated With Altered Cognitive Skills, Study Says

Munich, Germany: The moderate use of cannabis and other psychoactive substances is not associated with impaired cognitive functioning, according to clinical trial data published online by the journal *Human Psychopharmacology*.

Researchers at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich investigated the association between moderate substance use and cognition in a population-based sample of 284 young adults. Subjects completed a comprehensive battery of neuropsychological tests, including assessments of executive

functions, working memory and impulsivity. (Executive function is defined as "the cognitive process that regulates an individual's ability to organize thoughts and activities, prioritize tasks, manage time efficiently, and make decisions.")

Researchers determined, "More frequent cannabis use and more extensive alcohol consumption were associated with a higher degree of impulsiveness." They concluded, "Based on mild to moderate substance use, little indication of differences in executive functioning was found."

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. Full text of the study, "Is moderate substance use associated with altered executive functioning in a population-based sample of young adults," will appear in Human Psychopharmacology. Additional information on cannabis use and cognition is available from NORML online at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6812.

Marijuana Extracts Relieve Intractable Cancer Pain Better Than THC, Study Says

Plymouth, United Kingdom: The administration of Sativex, an oral spray consisting of natural cannabis extracts (primarily THC and cannabidiol aka CBD), significantly reduces cancer pain compared to placebo or THC alone, according to clinical trial data published online in the *Journal of Pain Management*.

An international team of investigators from the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Romania assessed the analgesic properties of Sativex in patients with intractable cancer pain. One hundred and seventy-seven subjects participated in the double blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial. Patients received Sativex, THC extract, or placebo. Researchers reported that patients' pain scores improved

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Authors concluded, "The results of this study show that the THC/CBD extract [Sativex] is an efficacious adjunctive treatment for cancer-related pain in patients who are not achieving an adequate analgesic response to opioids."

They added: "[I]n this study, the THC/CBD extract showed a more promising efficacy profile than the THC extract alone. This finding is supported by evidence of additional synergy between THC and CBD. CBD may enhance the analgesic potential of THC by means of potent inverse agonism at CB2 receptors, which may produce anti-inflammatory effects, along with its ability to inhibit immune cell migration. ... These results are very encouraging and merit further study."

A 2005 clinical trial previously demonstrated that cannabis extracts significantly reduced cancer pain compared to placebo.

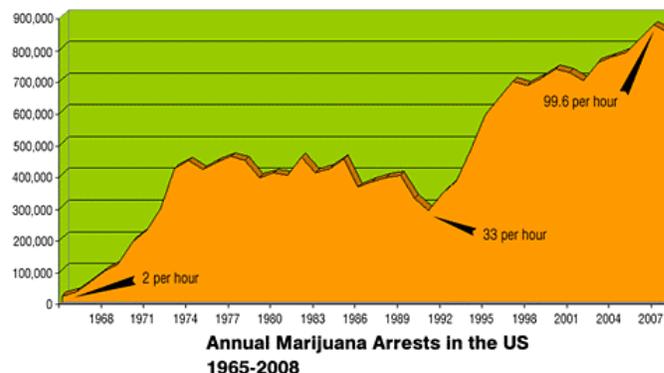
An estimated 25 percent to 40 percent of cancer patients experience some type of neuropathic pain for which conventionally available analgesics are not consistently effective.

In 2006, the United States Food and Drug Administration authorized recruitment for the first-ever US trial assessing the use of Sativex for cancer pain. To date, 360 patients have been recruited into the study from fourteen countries in North America, Europe, Latin America, and South Africa. Results from the trial are expected to be reported in the spring of 2010.

Sativex is already legally approved in Canada for the treatment of multiple sclerosis or cancer pain, and is pending regulatory approval in Great Britain and the European Union.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Multicenter, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled, parallel-group study of the efficacy, safety, and tolerability of THC: CBD extract in patients with intractable cancer-related pain," appears online in the Journal of Pain Management.

End the Waste, End the Abuse, End the War!



Annual Marijuana Arrests in the US
1965-2008

NORML

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws
www.norml.org

How? Just Act NORML! We - the United States - arrested our 20,000,000th pot-head in 2008, in 2006 we busted almost 900,000 - soon we'll be popping a million a year. W-V-NORML is reaching out at all levels to let cannabis law reform minded folks as well as the public know about cannabis prohibition's bid for it's own bail-out in Oregon and the related costs to we the people. In human as well as financial terms.

We will do this in part by surveying the people, both on the street and on-line; posing and posting Q&As - Are you NORML? Why/Why not? "Whats a NORML? Do you want to be NORML? "What does it mean?" What do you think needs to be done?

Along the way we will put "Rights" Cards in everybody's hands, distribute and play videos - like "Busted" - at every opportunity and do the all-around para-legal networking that will end up maximizing resistance, fostering jury nullification and generally turning victims into civilly disobedient activists.

Further we will engender not just "fishing", but "teaching to fish", and encourage & empower folks to network and organize at a neighborhood level (Heads in the 'Hood). Whenever we get contact from two or more in the same area we get one of them to find a local, public spot that can be advertised for meet-up. Then enable further private meetings and organizing for action. We can help in a number of ways but mostly we empower you folks to act upon your own initiative, especially with the local "ground game". Same with lobbying and watchdogging. Call 541.517-0957 or visit - <http://w-v-norml.org> for more.



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

Israel: Health Ministry To Expand Medical Marijuana Regulations

Tel Aviv, Israel: Israel's Ministry of Health has been instructed by lawmakers to expand regulations governing the production and use of medicinal cannabis by authorized patients, according to a news story published last week in *The Jerusalem Post*.

Under present Israeli policy, "Patients suffering from severe pain from cancer, multiple sclerosis or certain other conditions can apply for a license (from the Ministry of Health) to obtain free a supply of pure marijuana strains for smoking to relieve their pain," the *Post* reported.

An estimated 700 patients in Israel are licensed to use medical cannabis, which is supplied by a single private company "on a non-profit charitable basis." The government's pending regulations are expected to expand the number of authorized marijuana producers to five or six.

Earlier this year, the Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer became the first Israeli hospital to allow authorized patients to medicate with cannabis on their premises.

The Israeli government initially approved the limited legalization of medicinal cannabis in 1999.

Federal authorities in Canada and the Netherlands have also enacted regulations authorizing for the production and distribution of marijuana for medical purposes. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Deputy Director, at (202) 483-5500.*

R U NORML? DO U WANNA B?

Annual American deaths
caused by smoking marijuana.

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NORML

Then check out the **The Willamette Valley NORML Public meeting** which 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!

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