

## Sharpe, Tracey

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**Subject:** FW: Submission for committee inquiry into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community

**From:** joshua perera

**Sent:** Sunday, 11 November 2018 10:57 PM

**To:** Legislative Council Committee Office <[LCCO@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:LCCO@parliament.wa.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Submission for committee inquiry into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community

To those whom it may concern,  
I would like to present the following submission to be considered by the committee inquiry into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community.

I recently had a friend say to me that he blamed the current Cannabis situation on 1984. When I asked him to elaborate he said he was referring to the fact that in 1984 Hon. Ron Sackville Head of the Royal commission on Illegal drug use in Australia wrote "Australia has intentionally or otherwise misinterpreted the UN Single Use Act (UNSUA) on Cannabis. It is not about personal or medical use it is about eradicating trafficking. Australia should legalise for recreational use and regulate it as a medicine immediately," but for some reason the government has chosen to ignore this recommendation and has been increasing penalties and lowering the benchmark of what trafficking is since 1984.

Being that there is now medical evidence that whole plant Cannabis use has proved to be effective in the treatment and aid of: ADD, ADHD, Alcoholism, ALS, Alzheimer's Disease, Anorexia, Anxiety, Arthritis, Asthma, Ataxia, Autism, Autoimmune Disease, Bipolar Disorder, Cachexia, Cancer, Chemotherapy Treatment, Chronic Headaches, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Chronic Muscle Spasms, Chronic Pain, Crohn's Disease, Depression, Diabetes, Diverticulitis, Dyskinesia, Dystonia, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, Epilepsy, Fibromyalgia, Gastritis, Glaucoma, HIV/AIDs, Huntington's Disease, IBS, Insomnia, Lyme Disease, Migraines, Multiple Sclerosis, Myasthenia Gravis, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Opiate Dependency, Osteoarthritis, Parkinson's Disease, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Psoriatic Arthritis, Restless Leg Syndrome, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Severe Nausea, Schizophrenia, Sickle Cell Anemia, Sjogren's, Sleep Disorders, Spasticity, Spinal Cord Injury, Tourette's Syndrome, Traumatic Brain Injury, Ulcerative Colitis, Wasting Syndrome... Just to name a few with more uses being discovered all the time. There is evidence to suggest that most if not all long time users of Cannabis do in fact fall under one if not more of the a fore mentioned categories. The question is do we continue to criminalise these individuals, force them to put their hard earned tax payer money into the black market for medicine that there is no guarantee was grown healthily?

With there now being more and more evidence that the sugar is in fact the first gateway drug we are all exposed to. Sugar being just as addictive as cocaine according to new research, acting as a "gateway" to other addictive substances. One report published in 2017 of the British Journal of Sports medicine stated "Consuming sugar produces effects similar to that of cocaine, altering mood, possibly through its ability to induce reward and pleasure, leading to the seeking out of sugar,". While I know some would struggle to stomach this concept, then I will move over to the resounding evidence that has now built that Alcohol is infact the gateway drug when compared to both tobacco and cannabis. An abstract from a study published on the journal of school health concluded "that alcohol represented the "gateway" drug, leading to the use of tobacco, marijuana, and other illicit substances. Moreover, students who used alcohol exhibited a significantly greater likelihood of using both licit and illicit drugs."

The old beliefs that Cannabis caused mental illness such as Schizophrenia has been long since debunked with Harvard Medical School publishing in 2013 "The researchers concluded that the results of the current study, "both when analyzed using morbid risk and family frequency calculations, suggest that having an increased familial risk for schizophrenia is the underlying basis for schizophrenia — not the cannabis use."

There are now more than 100 Peer-Reviewed studies that conclude that cannabis cures cancer. Not only that, there are over 100 peer-reviewed studies, prominent medical organizations, and major government reports, which all combine to prove that cannabis is safe and effective in treating many serious ailments, including cancer. In fact, they claim, eating raw cannabis can help prevent health issues from arising altogether.

We now understand that this all works due to the discovery in 1991 that all animals poses an endocannabinoid system. In fact the human endocannabinoid system or ECS has been called “the most important physiologic system involved in establishing and maintaining human health.” Endocannabinoid receptors are the most abundant neuromodulatory receptors in the body. The ECS helps bring balance to the body. As a result, it is no surprise that scientists have observed changes in ECS activity in a number of diseases. Everything from neurodegenerative disorders to rheumatoid arthritis and cancer have shown changes in endocannabinoid levels and greater receptor expression. When the ECS is functioning properly, all our various body systems are maintained in a state of dynamic equilibrium, or homeostasis. But what happens when the ECS is dysfunctional or damaged? Scientists have found that certain conditions which are associated with hypersensitivity to pain or stimulus, such as migraines, fibromyalgia, and IBS, the ECS is dysfunctional. It is believed that by supplementing the body with naturally occurring cannabinoids from plants, we can correct this deficiency, relieve symptoms, and restore health. Before cannabis prohibition, hemp and marijuana had been used for thousands of years to treat a number of ailments, including epilepsy, headaches, arthritis, pain, depression, and nausea. Traditional healers may not have known why the plant was effective but their experience demonstrated its effectiveness and provided the basis for later scientific inquiry. The discovery of the ECS revealed a biological basis for the therapeutic effects of plant cannabinoids and has sparked this renewed interest in cannabis as medicine.

It is for all these reasons and more that I have yet to research yet, that I ask to you to consider changes to whole plant cannabis legislation when convening your Inquiry into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community. The decriminalisation, legalisation and regulation of Cannabis would take a huge swing at the pockets of those that profit off the black market and allow whole sections of our community to come out from under the guise of criminality for just trying to treat their ailments through the use of a natural plant. This would take a huge load off law enforcement freeing them up to take on larger more pressing societal problem substances, and could potential stand to make large review in taxes for the government to put into funding for other programs. The projected figures for taxation profit for the Australian government if they were to legalise and regulate Cannabis is over \$3.5billion in the first year alone.

I thank you for your time to consider my submission.



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