

Select Committee into Alternate Approaches to Reducing Illicit Drug Use

From:
Sent: Thursday, 29 November 2018 1:57 PM
To: Select Committee into Alternate Approaches to Reducing Illicit Drug Use
Subject: Submission to Committee

Submission to the Select Committee into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community

This submission represents the view or :

In order to reduce the harm of all drugs to society and any potential harm to young minds of super high THC cannabis I propose that legalisation of Cannabis will reduce harm.

* Harm reduction from all drugs:

Will occur due to reduced interactions with drug dealers who have the opportunity to cross sell other drugs. I know of two people who suffered as meth addicts for a number of years as a result of a drug dealer encouraging them to try meth each time they purchased cannabis from him. They continue to use cannabis as it has helped them transition away from meth. Over two years they have been meth free but grow their own cannabis in order to avoid interactions with drug dealers.

Cannabis is described as a gateway drug but taking it away from drug dealers makes this much less likely to be the case.

* Reduced harm from cannabis itself:

Cannabis is not just one plant, there are thousands of strains and the street product sold by criminals has been bred to be super strength high THC cannabis with little to zero neuroprotective CBD. This harm to a young person's mind is due to this increased prevalence of this type of plant. Legalisation and a controlled supply, legal sales of labelled seeds, alongside education will ensure a better cannabis product is sold and used by a consumer who will understand that THC without CBD may be harmful.

A legal model can ensure any product sold is labelled. Super high THC strains damage young minds and are far more prevalent today than in the past. A legal model can pull the product back to a more balanced CBD THC ratios. Education will enable consumers to choose the right product.

* Remove the harm to society of unjust laws that are discriminatory:

Mark McGowan clearly states the reason for Cannabis prohibition is due to the harm it inflicts on society. I would argue this basis is not valid when compared to alcohol and tobacco to name just two examples.

The whole basis of prohibition is flawed. We should not be having to beg and plea for this plant to be legalised. The basis of harm on which the law has been based does not stand up in the first place. Less deaths, less harm to society than both alcohol and tobacco.

Alcoholics are treated as having a health issue, cannabis users treated as criminals. Prohibiting based on harm cannot be a valid basis for cannabis as tobacco is proven more harmful and is legal. Prohibition is therefore discriminatory and unjust.

Other benefits :

* Regulate and tax the industry rather than push it into the criminal underground

* Jobs that are no longer hidden in a black market. Tax revenue too. This can be used for harm reduction from all drugs due to the revenue being invested in rehab centres and education. Police and judicial system cost savings can also be redirected to harm reduction programs for meth and mental health.

- * Will help to better control access, illegal to sell or supply minors. Criminals ignore this but licensed suppliers more likely to adhere.
- * Enables those that develop a health issue to openly discuss this with health professionals without fear of judgement
- * A plant should not be illegal. A crime requires a victim.
- * A large number of people want to use this plant medicinally or for preventative health benefits. This should be their right if they believe it will work. There is growing evidence of a huge variety of health benefits and cannabis medicines were widely used before prohibition. It should not require further research, especially research skewed by profit seeking interests. The health benefits are astounding. It certainly appears to be a plant that works well with the human body / immune system and it should be a human right to treat any illness with a plant. Where is the crime in doing so.

Public opinion is shifting fast in this area. Only two weeks ago I had a locker room conversation with 5 city professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds. I was shocked that all five supported complete legalisation. This was based on health reasons and reducing the impact of drug dealers on our society.

I'm terrified of my kids becoming exposed to drugs. At the moment they are 8 years old and it is a big fear for my wife and I. I truly believe that destroying this huge network of organised criminals, and more informal drug dealers, would start with removing the cannabis revenue from them. Prohibition doesn't work, even the death penalty doesn't appear to deter people overseas as ultimately it comes down to money.

Kind regards