

Class,

Marijuana has been a topic of debate all over the media. The bone of contention is whether it should be legalized or not. Also, the discussion is on how the government would make the legalization of marijuana work. In my view, marijuana should be legalized—though with strict policies—since there are way more positive things that come out of it being legal.

The regulation of marijuana in the country started in the 20th century. Several policies were enacted to control its use. For instance, in 1914, the Harrison Act that declared the use of marijuana a crime was passed. Additionally, in 1942, marijuana was removed from the country's pharmacopoeia. Subsequently, the substance was included in the Federal Narcotics Act in 1956 with strict penalties for its possession. The Controlled substances Act of 1970 also categorized marijuana as a schedule I substance.

However, the reclassification of marijuana has been underway in several states and at the federal level. Currently, nineteen (19) states have legalized marijuana, including Washington, Colorado, California, Massachusetts, Oregon and Alaska (Hansen & Alas, 2021). I support the legalization of marijuana (however) with the following policy safeguards regarding its manufacturing, purchasing, and consumption.

One way of regulating and monitoring the manufacturing of marijuana is introducing a state-run monopoly on production, distribution and sale. This measure will keep the prices artificially high and reduce underground market competition. State monopolies, especially alcohol monopolies, have successfully kept prices higher through low competition, reduced access to youths and reduced overall use levels.

Alternatively, the government should establish a robust licensing option if a government monopoly is not possible. Participants in the supply chain—such as growers, processors, wholesalers and distributors—should be licensed to ensure that the products meet minimum quality standards required by law. Although licensing cannot sufficiently monitor the drug supply, it will limit competition, limit the density of retail outlets, enable effective tax collection and reduce potential diversion.

Regarding purchasing, private stores selling the drug should be restricted. As a sole distributor, the government can aggressively pursue violators, illegitimate retailers and distributors. Having a monopoly control facilitates messaging concerning the content of marijuana products sold, quality, warnings about risks, and adherence to point-of-sales marketing restrictions.

Alternatively, if the government is not the sole distributor, purchasing the drug can be regulated by requiring individual consumers to receive a license to purchase and consume marijuana. Also, marketing and the number of marijuana products sold should be limited through a licensing and monitoring mechanism.

Finally, consumption can be monitored by limiting consumption in public places. This measure reduces exposure to secondhand smoke and the extent to which marijuana is viewed by

youths/teenagers as socially acceptable. Also, consumption can be controlled by proscribing driving under the influence of marijuana since it is dangerous (Armentano, 2013). A mechanism for testing road users should be instituted to minimize such instances. With these measures, the government can effectively control the manufacturing, purchasing, and consumption of marijuana.

-MyName

References

Armentano, P. (2013). Cannabis and psychomotor performance: a rational review of the evidence and implications for public policy. *Drug testing and analysis*, 5(1), 52-56.

Hansen, C., & Alas, H. (2021). *Where Is Marijuana Legal? A Guide to Marijuana Legalization*. US News. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/where-is-marijuana-legal-a-guide-to-marijuana-legalization>.



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