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To: Bill Botzow; Michael Marcotte; Warren Kitzmiller; Carolyn Partridge; Richard Lawrence; John Bartholomew; Ann Pugh; Sandy Haas; Francis McFaun; Christopher Pearson; William Lippert; Anne Donahue; David Deen; Steve Beyor; Tony Klein; Kesha Ram; Mike Hebert; Maxine Grad; Willem Jewett; Tom Burditt; Donna Sweaney; Debbie Evans; Dennis Devereux

Subject: Request for a NO vote regarding Cannabis Legislation

Dear Committee Members;

I am writing as a Williston resident, native Vermonter and mother of 4 children in regard to the issue of the consideration of legalizing cannabis within the State of Vermont, my concerns are many and strong. I strongly oppose the legalization of this drug for many reasons, here are a few:

- We are currently fighting a battle against heroine - **WE REGULATE OPIATES!!! THIS IS NOT HELPING ELIMINATE THE HEROINE RELATED HEALTH CRISIS, WHY WOULD THE REGULATION OF CANNABIS BE ANY DIFFERENT and could this make this drug-related health crisis even worse?**

- We are cutting programs/funding for Education desperately seeking monies to boost our State's economy: **the regulation of cannabis will require additional monies for regulating, training "employees" and State Law Enforcement, research for the installment of an accurate system with which we monitor/test for safe driving/intoxication levels and additional monies to monitor the data of how legalization of cannabis is affecting our State.** While the impetus behind the legalization seems to be the push of revenue from the distribution/sale, we would also be creating more of a strain on our States Finances. **DON'T CUT EDUCATION FUNDING AND CREATE EXPENDITURES ON MARIJUANA. CONTEMPLATE THE MESSAGE THIS SENDS TO THE CHILDREN/PEOPLE OF VERMONT?**

- Cannabis while seen as harmless is most generally smoked (without a filter) - we have worked hard as a Nation and worldwide in the recognition of **SMOKING AS THE LEADING CAUSE OF LUNG CANCER** among other detrimental illnesses that we are working hard and investing well-directed finances toward eliminating. **Our children are getting the message that smoking is not good for their bodies and living healthier lives due to their informed choices. Why in ignorance would we legalize a substance that is most generally smoked and send contradictory messages to our youth while creating another health crisis in our State.**

- The use of cannabis (much like alcohol) may be more lucrative and "controlled" when regulated, but based on factual information from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (like alcohol) **does lead to addictive use and behavior.**

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/marijuana-addictive>

- **The use of cannabis leads to the experimentation and use of stronger narcotics and other drugs.** Children/teenagers do not have full development of their frontal lobe and still need guidance with decision making and good examples of choices that will help them in the

future. The familiarization of cannabis (formerly an illegal drug, which alone is a warning sign to youth even though it does not deter all.) creates the mentality of innocence to all drugs that are deemed illegal - I see the ignorance in youth perhaps stating: "maybe the government will reverse their mindset towards harder drugs as well" - "cannabis won't harm me - how bad could PCP, ecstasy or heroine be?" WE NEED TO GUIDE OUR CHILDREN AND CITIZENS, NOT CONFUSE THEM.

• **COLORADO** is experiencing **DIFFICULTIES REGULATING** :

1. **INGESTION OF EDIBLES BY CHILDREN (AT LEAST TWO DEATHS RESULTING)**
2. **INCREASED STUDENT DROP OUT AND HOMELESSNESS RATES, AND**
3. **Colorado is LOOKING AT PENDING FINANCIAL BURDEN DUE TO LAWSUITS FILED BY SURROUNDING STATES BASED ON INCREASED DEMAND ON BORDER STATES LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

<http://www.newsweek.com/unexpected-side-effects-legalizing-weed-339931>

• One final though and an important one is the **NEGATIVE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE, with the increase of pesticide use and pests related to the farming of cannabis.** Vermont is an agricultural State, our livelihood has been based on agriculture for years and even the idea of a negative implication from the legalization of cannabis should deter our consideration based on the protection of our farmland and family farms. We also need to consider the increased use of pesticides in the State of Vermont on our beautiful LAKE CHAMPLAIN. As an agricultural State we have already impacted the clean waters of Lake Champlain - this will bring more pollution to our treasured Lake both from the standpoint of **PRESERVING A NATURAL RESOURCE AND THE SOURCE OF OUR DRINKING WATER.**

I ask you to vote NO and oppose the legalization of cannabis.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Marino