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Subject: Marijuana rethink?

Dear Chittenden County Representatives,

My understanding is that the issue of Cannabis reform will be passed to the House for consideration soon. Below is a Front Porch Forum post I wrote in response to Rep. Zuckerman's recent update on this issue.

I do realize I goofed in the post. Somehow I linked Act 46 with Cannabis Reform and, of course, those are two different issues. Oh well!

As mentioned in my post, up until recently I was all for Cannabis reform. There are many good reasons to create better laws around this drug and to be able to regulate it, but I now just can't get past the potential for harm for young people.

Perhaps you are already aware of the information I have shared and have considered it. I just want to be certain we are doing the right thing here because the repercussion could be great. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the people of Vermont. Jean Markey-Duncan

Thank you to Rep. David Zuckerman for the FPF update on Cannabis Reform, Act 46, and for the link to Rep. Zagar's thoughts on the subject.

A month or so ago I would have been in complete agreement with our hard working Representatives, if I hadn't tuned in to a very hopeful program related to the treatment of mental illness that was broadcast on public radio. While the program focused mostly on how we will soon be able to customize medication to the specific mental disorder unique to the individual, part of the segment was about the causes of mental illness.

Specifically and surprisingly for me, was the finding of a very real link between psychosis and marijuana use in young people. It gave me pause since I personally know two young people who did developed psychosis in late high school, both smoked marijuana regularly and both are now living with schizophrenia, a devastating mental disorder.

I think it is important for us to consider the research out of King's College, UK, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/about/difference/PDFs/12-Uncovering-the-link-between-cannabis-and-psychosis-2.pdf>, before we make any final decisions regarding cannabis. We might also consider a campaign to educate children on the dangers of using this drug and especially at an early ages. In the UK, where resources were spent on education, marijuana use dropped.

I know we have been debating this issue for sometime now and lots of energy has gone into it, but let's not let that fact blind us to new and important research.