

From: donotreply@legmt.gov
To: [LEG Cmte-EAICcomment](#)
Subject: Public Comment for EAIC
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Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

Date: 1st March 2024 10:20

First Name:

Coleen

Last Name:

Smith

Email Address:

coleen@youthconnectionscoalition.org

Subject:

Marijuana comments

Comment:

Per the request by the Montana Cannabis Industry: The Montana Alliance of Prevention and Youth Connections continues to oppose opening the floodgates to allow marijuana advertising. When the voters approved marijuana commercialization it was clear in the initiative, they did NOT want advertising allowed. The industry has consistently ignored the law (MCA 16-12-211) which states “persons with licenses may not advertise marijuana or marijuana products... except for maintaining a website and advertising on web applications” (with additional restrictions on content). There are billboards, radio ads, newspaper ads, stall readers, ads on taxis, park benches, etc. Our request is to enforce the law already on the books, not allow more advertising. Multiple studies have shown that marijuana advertisements increase use among youth. A study by Washington State University reported, “Advertising and location of cannabis retailers influence adolescents' intentions to use marijuana”. A study by the RAND corporation found “Adolescents who view more advertising for medical marijuana are more likely to use marijuana, express intentions to use the drug and have more-positive expectations about the substance”. And a study posted on the CDC website stated, “Exposure to marijuana advertisements was associated with higher odds of current marijuana use among adolescents.” According to the recent Prevention Needs Assessment, 30-day marijuana use by youth has increased 18% across Montana since legalization. The number one reason kids are in treatment is for marijuana. Do we really want to increase those numbers by allowing (more) advertising? The industry tries to justify advertising by claiming Freedom of Speech. According to the Legal Dictionary, Freedom of Speech is defined as “The right to express your beliefs, ideas, and opinions without the fear of governmental reprisal or censorship.” The Law Dictionary defines advertising as ““buying an advertisement to get new customers or improve relations with the old customers”. Advertising is clearly what the industry is doing. Regarding striking the language inserted in the 2023 legislative session that requires physicians who reach

making 39 referrals for medicinal marijuana to be reviewed by the Montana Board of Medical Examiners: what is the point of the request? This seems like safeguard. Why do we want to remove safeguards? Per their request to “shore up regulation and enforcement against the illegal market” with the tax revenue, we would further request marijuana tax revenues go to mitigate the damages from legalization. A study from Colorado showed residents pay 4.5 times more than tax revenues collected to address the effects of legalization. Lastly, we oppose the request by the Montana Cannabis Guild to extend hours for pot shops. More hours mean more sales, which means more use. That doesn't benefit anyone... well, except the pot shop owners. Thank you!

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