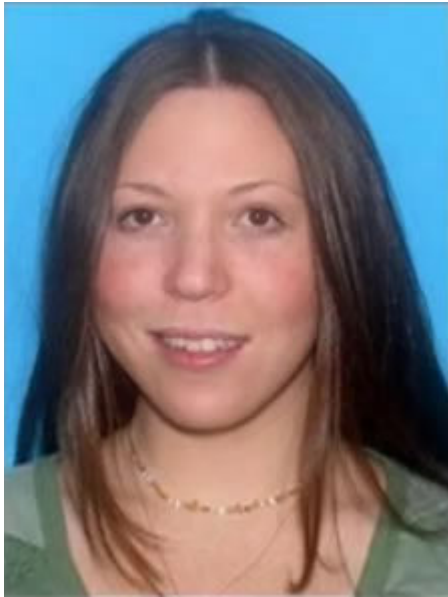




The Tragic Death Of Rachel Hoffman -- And The Tragedy That Is Pot Prohibition



Rachel Hoffman is dead.

Rachel Hoffman, like many young adults, occasionally smoked marijuana.

But Rachel Hoffman is not dead as a result of smoking marijuana; she is dead as a result of marijuana prohibition.

Under prohibition, Rachel faced up to five years in prison for possessing a small amount of marijuana.

Under prohibition, the police in Rachel's community viewed her as nothing more than a

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Members Of Congress Demand An End To Federal Pot Possession Arrests - The Use Of Cannabis "Ought To Be None Of The Government's Business," Lawmakers Say At Capitol Hill Press Conference

Washington, DC: Members of Congress called on lawmakers to enact legislation that would limit the government's authority to arrest and prosecute adults who possess marijuana for their own personal use.

The federal government should "not lock people up or use scarce federal resources to arrest people for using or possessing ... marijuana," Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) announced at a Capitol Hill press conference Wednesday. "The vast amount of human activity ought to be none of the government's business. I don't think it is the government's business to tell you how to spend your leisure time."

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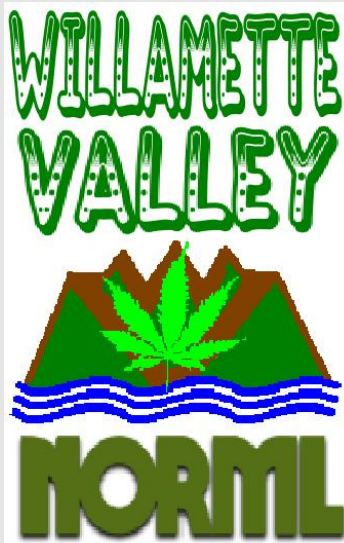
US Drug Enforcement Administration 'Celebrates' 35 Years Of Failure

Washington, DC: The United State's top federal anti-drug agency, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), turned 35-years-old this week, according to US Department of Justice press release.

"The Drug Enforcement Administration was created 35 years ago on [July 1] by President Richard Nixon, who through an Executive Order established a single unified command to combat 'an all-out global war on the drug menace,'" the DOJ release states. "At its outset, the DEA had 1,470 Special Agents, a budget of less than \$75 million, and a presence in 31 countries. Today, the DEA has 5,235 Special Agents, a budget of more than \$2.4 billion and 87 foreign offices in 63 countries."

Commenting on the agency's anniversary, NORML podcast host

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The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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Check 'em out on-line! *visit:*

WillametteValleyNORML.org

A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: www.norml.org**

Today Willamette Valley NORML joins the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from RACHEL, page 1 > common "criminal," and threatened her with years in jail unless she cooperated with them as an untrained, unsupervised confidential informant.

Under prohibition, the law enforcement officers responsible for placing Rachel in the very situation that resulted in her murder have failed to publicly express any remorse -- because, after all, under prohibition Rachel Hoffman was no longer a human being deserving of such sympathies.

On Friday, ABC's 20/20 shed a national spotlight on the tragedy surrounding Rachel Hoffman's untimely death -- and the tragedy that is marijuana prohibition.

Are pot users criminals? The tragic case of Rachel Hoffman
via ABC News

After being caught twice with a "baggie" of marijuana, 23-year old Rachel Hoffman was reportedly told by police in Tallahassee, Florida that she would go to prison for four years unless she became an undercover informant.

The young woman, a recent graduate of Florida State University, was murdered during a botched sting operation two months ago.

... "The idea of waging a war on drugs is to protect people and here it seems like we're putting people in harm's way," said Lance Block, a lawyer hired by Rachel's parents.

The Florida Attorney General's office says it is reviewing the procedures and protocol of the Tallahassee police. Rachel's case also has raised new questions about state and federal laws related to marijuana possession.

"I'm calling her a criminal," Tallahassee police chief Dennis Jones told 20/20, who maintains that both drug dealers and drug users are considered criminals to his department.

Under Florida law, possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana is a felony.

Rachel was also found in possession of two ecstasy pills, a felony under Florida law no

matter the quantity because it "has a high potential for abuse and has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States."

The Tallahassee police chief says Rachel was suspected of selling drugs and she was rightly treated as a criminal.

For more information or to leave a comment, Visit:

http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7669

<continued from CONGRESS DEMANDS, page 1 > Rep. Frank, along with Reps. William Lacy Clay (D-MO) and Barbara Lee (D-CA), called on lawmakers to support legislation, HR 5843, which would eliminate federal penalties for the possession and non-profit transfer of marijuana by adults. Representatives Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), William Lacy Clay, Barbara Lee, Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Ron Paul (R-TX), and Jim McDermott (D-WA) are co-sponsoring the bill, entitled "the Personal Use of Marijuana by Responsible Adults Act of 2008."

The legislation is the first proposal to be introduced in Congress in 30 years that seeks to eliminate federal pot penalties. According to a 2006 Bureau of Justice Statistics report, 12.7 percent of state inmates and 12.4 percent of federal inmates serving time for drug violations are incarcerated for marijuana offenses.

Speaking at the press conference, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said: "With alcohol, we acknowledge the distinction between use and abuse and we focus our law enforcement involvement on efforts to stop irresponsible use. We do not arrest and jail responsible alcohol drinkers. This should be our policy with marijuana as well."

According to a nationwide Time Magazine/CNN poll, three out of four Americans believe that adults who possess marijuana should no longer face criminal penalties.

Since 1990, more than 11 million Americans have been arrested for violating marijuana laws, according to the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. Of those arrested, nearly 90 percent are charged with minor possession - not trafficking,

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<continued from previous page> cultivation, or sale. Nearly 75 percent of those arrested are under 30 years of age.

"The federal government's misguided prohibition of marijuana is a war on young people," NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said. "Because of this failed public policy we have alienated an entire generation to believe that the police and the federal government are instruments of their oppression rather than their protection."

House Bill 5843 is currently before the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, which is a part of the House Judiciary Committee. In addition, the Bill has been referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee's.

For more information, please contact NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre at (202) 483-5500. Video footage from the press conference. Additional video is available from CNN. More information regarding HR 5843 is available online via NORML's Take Action Center.

<continued from DEA CELEBRATES FAILURE, page 1 > Russ Belville noted that illicit drug use, production, potency, availability, and drug-related overdose deaths have all increased sharply over the past three decades.

"Bigger budgets, more drugs. More arrests, more deaths. More seizures, more potency. More agents, more users. For their thirty-fifth anniversary, perhaps they should change their name to the Drug Encouragement Administration," he said.

Belville has posted a critical review of the federal agency online at:

<http://stash.norml.org/2008/06/30/the-dea-turns-35-today/>
For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

National MS Society Makes Recommendations Regarding Therapeutic Use Of Cannabis

Washington, DC: Cannabis has the potential to treat symptoms of multiple sclerosis as well as limit the progression of the disease, according to an expert opinion paper published by the US National Multiple Sclerosis Society. However, the Society stopped short of recommending that MS patients use the drug medicinally.

"Although it is clear that cannabinoids have potential both for the management of MS symptoms such as

pain and spasticity, as well as for neuroprotection, the Society cannot at this time recommend that medical marijuana be made widely available to people with MS for symptom management," the Society concludes. "This situation might change, should better data become available that clearly demonstrate benefit."

The Society recommends that future clinical trials focus on methods of cannabinoid administration that deliver the drug to the bloodstream rapidly, such as vaporization.

The Society also recommends clinical trials be performed to investigate and quantify cannabis' potential to slow disease progression, citing "anecdotal reports from patients ... that cannabis reduces the frequency of their MS attacks."

Investigators at Plymouth's Peninsula Medical School in Britain recently announced that they had recruited nearly 500 MS patients for a three-year clinical trial assessing whether the use of oral THC can significantly slow the onset of multiple sclerosis.

Clinical data reported in 2006 from an extended open-label study of 167 multiple sclerosis patients found that the use of whole plant cannabinoid extracts relieved symptoms of pain, spasticity, and bladder incontinence for an extended period of treatment (mean duration of study participants was 434 days) without requiring subjects to increase their dose.

Results from a separate two-year open label extension trial in 2007 also reported that the administration of cannabis extracts was associated with long-term reductions in neuropathic pain in select MS patients. On average, patients in the study required fewer daily doses of the drug and reported lower median pain scores the longer they took it.

Commenting on the MS Society report, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said: "The MS Society's recommendations are a positive step, but they don't go far enough. Surveys indicate that as many as one out of two MS patients use cannabis therapeutically, yet this report does nothing to challenge these patients legal status as criminals."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

Full text of the MS Society paper, "Recommendations Regarding the Use of Cannabis in Multiple Sclerosis". Additional information on cannabinoids and multiple sclerosis is available from NORML.

New Orleans: District Attorney Charging Minor Pot Offenders With Felonies

New Orleans, LA: Hundreds of low-level pot possession offenders are facing five-to-20 years in prison after being charged with felony offenses by The New Orleans new district attorney, according to an investigative report published this week by the newspaper New Orleans City Business.

The report finds that a disproportionate number of felony cases filed by District Attorney Keva Landrum-Johnson are related to the prosecution of small-time marijuana offenders who are facing their second or third possession offense. Critics of the policy charge, including Steve Singer, the Chief of Trials for the New Orleans Public Defenders Office, charge that the filings have "clogged the courts with non-violent, petty offenses, drained the resources of the criminal justice system and damaged low-income African-American communities."

Under Louisiana law, first time pot possession is a misdemeanor offense. However, DA's may charge repeat offenders with either a misdemeanor or a felony. Under state law, a second marijuana possession offense is punishable by up to five years in prison. A third offense is punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

The city's previous DAs routinely charged repeat pot possession offenders with misdemeanors rather than felonies, the paper reported.

It estimated that the city courts could handle nearly 4,000 marijuana possession cases this year."District Attorney Landrum-Johnson may think she's being 'tough on crime,' but really she's being dumb on crime," NORML Legal Counsel Keith Stroup said. "Her constituents are demanding that she crack down on violent crime. Instead, the DA is clogging the courts and wasting police and prosecutorial resources by throwing the book at pot smokers." *For more information, please contact Keith Stroup, NORML's Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.*

California: Nonviolent Offender Rehabilitation Act Qualifies For November Ballot

Sacramento, CA: State election officials have approved a measure for the November 2008 ballot that mandates probation for non-violent drug offenders and reduces pot possession penalties. Sponsored by the Drug Policy Alliance, Proposition 5

(aka the Nonviolent Offender Rehabilitation Act), would expand the diversion of non-violent offenders to drug treatment and increase funding for state-sponsored rehabilitation programs. The proposal would also reduce minor marijuana possession penalties from a misdemeanor (punishable by a \$100 criminal fine with a criminal record) to a non-criminal infraction (punishable by a \$100 civil fine with no criminal record).

According to the NORA campaign website, "Because NORA would sharply limit the incarceration of nonviolent offenders, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office projects that the measure would save California \$1 billion or more each year in prison and parole costs. ... [T]he state would see additional net savings of \$2.5 billion over several years as prison-construction costs would be reduced by NORA's reforms."

The California Democratic Party, the California Society of Addiction Medicine, the California League of Women Voters, and the California Academy of Family Physicians have each endorsed Proposition 5. The DPA championed a similar, but less expansive statewide initiative (Proposition 36) in 2000, which passed with 61 percent of the vote. For more information, please visit:

<http://noracampaign.blogspot.com>

Pot Compound Enhances Efficacy Of Anti-Cancer Agents, Study Says

London, United Kingdom: The administration of THC in combination with conventional anti-leukemia therapies enhances the effectiveness of anti-cancer agents in vitro (e.g., in a test tube or petri dish), according to preclinical data to be published in the journal *Leukemia & Lymphoma*.

Investigators at St George's University and St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London reported that THC acts synergistically with other cytotoxic agents (toxic agents that effect specific cells) to target and kill leukemic cells. "Overall, these results demonstrate for the first time that a combination approach with THC and established cytotoxic agents may enhance cell death," authors concluded.

Investigators had previously reported that THC was a "potent inducer of apoptosis" (cell suicide) in leukemic cell lines. Earlier this year, the journal *Cancer Research* reported that the administration of cannabinoids halts the spread of a wide range of cancers, including prostate cancer, breast cancer, > lung cancer, pancreatic cancer, and brain cancer.

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<continued from previous page> Commenting on the study, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said that the findings might indicate a future role for cannabinoids as an adjunct to standard anti-cancer treatments like chemotherapy.

The study's authors estimated that anti-cancer drug derived from cannabinoids could become available within "two to three years."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director. Full text of the study, "Enhancing the in vitro cytotoxic activity of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol in leukemic cells through a combinatorial approach," will appear in *Leukemia & Lymphoma*.

ONDCP Insider: Drug Czar's Office Is "Flying Blind"

Washington, DC: Claims made by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) that America is making "progress" in the so-called 'war on drugs' are not based on evidence or measurable performance, according to an essay published this week by former ONDCP budget director John Carnevale.

Writing for the HuffingtonPost.com, Carnevale - who spent eleven years working in the Drug Czar's office - states: "[T]he Office of National Drug Control Policy ... claims that America has reached a turning point in the war on drugs. In reality, we have little reason to believe a significant change has occurred."

He continues: "Though Congress created ONDCP to formulate research-driven and performance-based policy, assess and modify policy through performance measures, and give a precise accounting of the federal drug control budget, ONDCP fails at all of those tasks. ... As a consequence, policy is now flying blind resulting in lost opportunities for more success."

Full text of Carnevale's essay, "The Failure of the Office of National Drug Control Policy," *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.*

Case Study: Inhaled Cannabis Improves Symptoms Of ADHD

Heidelberg, Germany: Oral administration of synthetic THC capsules (dronabinol) mitigates symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), according to a case study published by the International Association for Cannabis as Medicine (IACM, Germany).

Investigators at the Heidelberg University Medical Center reported that smoking cannabis dramatically improved the performance, behavior, and mental state of a 28-year-old male patient diagnosed with severe ADHD. "The present case report suggests that individuals suffering from ADHD ... may - in some cases - benefit from cannabis treatment in that it appears to regulate activation to a level which may be considered optimum for performance," researchers concluded.

Full text of the case study previously appeared in the German journal *Archives of Criminology*. For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director. Full text of the study, "Cannabis improves symptoms of ADHD,"

Austrian Parliament Approves Medical Marijuana Use

Vienna, Austria: Austrian Health regulators will be legally permitted to grow and dispense cannabis for therapeutic purposes under legislation approved by Parliament last week. The Austrian Health Ministry will oversee production of the drug, according to an Agency France-Presse (AFP) news wire report.

To date, only a handful of European nations, including the Netherlands, Germany (via federal permit only), and Finland (via court order), allow for the use of medicinal cannabis by qualified patients. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.*

Hawaii: Governor Vetoes Medical Marijuana Task Force Measure

Honolulu, HI: Republican Governor Linda Lingle (R) vetoed legislation this week that sought to establish a study committee to explore options for providing legal cannabis for state-qualified medical cannabis patients.

As approved by the legislature, House Bill 2675 called on the committee to make recommendations regarding "the feasibility of developing safe growing facilities ... for qualified patients with written certification to grow medical marijuana for their medical use." The task force was also mandated to review statewide guidelines authorizing the amount of medical cannabis patients may legally use and possess under state law. In her veto message, Gov. Lingle said she opposed the bill because "the use of marijuana, even medical marijuana, is illegal under

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<continued from previous page> federal law," and because she believes that there are alternative prescription drugs available besides cannabis. "This bill is objectionable because it is an exercise aimed at finding ways to circumvent federal law," she concluded.

The legislature did not elect to override the Governor's veto. Currently, an estimated 3,000 Hawaiians are registered to use medical cannabis under Hawaii law. *For more information, please contact Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.*

Congress Moves Forward On Cannabis 'Candy' Crackdown

Washington, DC: The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved legislation introduced by Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA) that seeks to enact mandatory minimum penalties for persons found to have manufactured or dispensed edible cannabis products that have been "marketed to appear similar to a candy product."

Cannabis-based food products were the targets of a federal DEA investigation in California last year. The edibles, which are preferred by some patients who wish to avoid smoking, had been popular items among some of California's medical cannabis dispensaries prior to the DEA's crackdown.

As passed by the Judiciary, Feinstein's proposal - Senate Bill 1211 - would double penalties for anyone who "manufactures, creates, distributes, or possesses with intent to distribute a controlled substance that is flavored, colored, packaged, or otherwise altered in a way that is designed to make that controlled substance more appealing" to children.

The Senate is not expected to take any imminent action on the bill. For more information, please contact Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.

Marijuana Extracts Provide Superior Pain Relief Compared To Plant's Isolated Compounds, Study Says. "Cannabis sativa evoked a total relief of neuropathic pain, ameliorating the effect of single cannabinoids"

Milan, Italy: The administration of whole-plant cannabis extracts provides superior pain relief compared to the administration of the plant's isolated components, according to preclinical data to

be published in the journal *Phytotherapy Research*. Investigators at the University of Milan, Department of Pharmacology assessed the antinociceptive efficacy of plant-derived cannabis extracts compared to the administration of a single cannabinoid in an animal model of neuropathic pain.

Researchers reported that the administration of single cannabinoids such as THC or CBD (cannabidiol) produced limited relief compared to the administration of plant extracts containing multiple cannabinoids, terpenes (oils), and flavonoids (pigments). "[T]he use of a standardized extract of *Cannabis sativa* ... evoked a total relief of thermal hyperalgesia, in an experimental model of neuropathic pain, ... ameliorating the effect of single cannabinoids," investigators concluded.

They added: "Collectively, these findings strongly support the idea that the combination of cannabinoid and non-cannabinoid compounds, as present in [plant-derived] extracts, provide significant advantages in the relief of neuropathic pain compared with pure cannabinoids alone. ... Further studies of cannabis-based medicines in neuropathic pain are now required to demonstrate a clinically relevant improvement in the treatment of this condition."

Two separate US clinical trials recently affirmed that inhaled cannabis significantly reduces neuropathy in patients with chronic pain conditions, such as HIV or spinal cord injury, compared to placebo.

Previously published preclinical data on cannabis and analgesia have shown that cannabinoids, when administered in concert with either opiates or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), evoke greater reductions in pain compared to the administration of either drug alone. For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director. Full text of the study, "Antihyperalgesic effect of a *Cannabis sativa* extract in a rat model of neuropathic pain," will appear in the journal *Phytotherapy Research*.

Massachusetts: Pot Decrim Initiative Qualifies For November Ballot Measure Would Replace Criminal Penalties With A \$100 Fine

Boston, MA: State election officials have approved a measure for the November 2008 ballot that seeks to decriminalize the possession and use of small amounts of cannabis by persons age 18 or older. Sponsored by the Committee for Sensible Marijuana Policy, the measure would replace criminal

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News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

<continued from previous page> penalties for the possession of up to one ounce of marijuana with a civil fine of no more than \$100. Defendants who pay the fine would not have to appear in court, nor would they be subjected to a criminal record. Under current Massachusetts law, citizens arrested for minor marijuana offenses face up to six months in jail and a fine of up to \$500.

According to a spring 2008 poll, state voters favor the proposal by a margin of 2 to 1. Since 2002, more than 480,000 voters in 127 Massachusetts communities have endorsed non-binding resolutions to liberalize local pot policies. If voters approve the measure this fall, Massachusetts would be the first state to enact the decriminalization of marijuana since Nevada's legislature did so in 2001. Currently, twelve states have enacted versions of marijuana decriminalization - replacing criminal sanctions with fine-only penalties for minor pot violators.

Michigan voters will also decide on a separate statewide initiative this November that seeks to legalize the medical use of cannabis for qualified patients. If enacted, Michigan will become the thirteenth state since 1996 to authorize the legal use of medical cannabis, and the ninth state to do so by voter initiative. *For more information, please contact NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre at (202) 483-5500, or visit the Committee for Sensible Marijuana Policy online at:*

<http://sensiblemarijuanapolicy.org/>

US Leads The World In Illicit Drug Use ***"A punitive policy towards possession and use accounts for limited variation in nation-level rates of illegal drug use," WHO study says***

Washington, DC: Illicit drug use is more prevalent in the United States than anywhere else in the world, according to statistics published this week in the journal *PLoS* (Public Library of Science) *Medicine*. Investigators at the World Health Organization (WHO) analyzed survey data from 54,000 citizens in 17 countries in the Americas (United States, Colombia, and Mexico), Europe (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Ukraine), the Middle East and Africa (Israel, Lebanon, Nigeria, South Africa), Asia (Japan, and separate surveys in Beijing and Shanghai in the People's Republic of China), and Oceania (New Zealand). "The US, which has been driving much of the

*** NOTE! The Willamette Valley NORML Public meeting * Happens every 4th Sat. of the month and will be at h'ERb'S Toasted Subs, 1210 Willamette St, Eugene call: 541.517-0957 -or- visit: <http://WillametteValleyNORML.org>**



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world's drug research and drug policy agenda, stands out with higher levels of use of alcohol, cocaine, and cannabis, despite [the enactment of] punitive illegal drug policies," authors concluded. "The Netherlands, with a less criminally punitive approach to cannabis use than the US, has experienced lower levels of use, particularly among younger adults. Clearly, by itself, a punitive policy towards possession and use accounts for limited variation in nation-level rates of illegal drug use."

Commenting on the study NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said: "Since 1980, the number of US drug offenders behind bars has risen by an astronomical 1100 percent. Yet despite politicians' fixation on punishing drug offenders with longer and more severe prison sentences, Americans' thirst for illicit substances still remains greater than anywhere else on the globe, and is more than twice as high as that of most Western European nations - including those nations that have decriminalized or legalized the possession and use of cannabis." *For more info, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500, or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Toward a global view of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and cocaine use: Findings from the WHO World Mental Health Surveys," appears online at:*

<http://medicine.plosjournals.org>

*** THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY (W-V) NORML NEWS REPORT > * P.O. Box 10957, EUGENE, OREGON, 97440 * PH: (541) 517-0957 * EMAIL: newsroom@willamettevalleynorml.org * OR VISIT: www.WillametteValleyNORML.org**