

News, Announcements and Information from

# WILLAMETTE VALLEY NORML



your local chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

## NORML Presents \$14 Billion 'Cannabis Stimulus' Package To The U.S. Treasury

***"All we ask in exchange for our \$14 billion is that our government respects our decision to use marijuana privately and responsibly"***

**New York, NY, USA:** NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre presented a mock check to the U.S. Treasury Department in the sum of \$14 billion on Wednesday, April 15 (Tax Day), at a press conference at the steps of the General Post Office in New York City.

The \$14 billion check total represents the combined savings and tax revenues that would be generated by regulating the sale and production of cannabis like alcohol, according to a 2005 analysis by Harvard University senior lecturer Jeffrey Miron and endorsed by over 500 distinguished economists.

"We represent the millions of

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NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre presents a mock check to the U.S. Treasury Department in the sum of **\$14 billion** at a press conference on the steps of the General Post Office in New York City.

### Hemp Farming Control Act Reintroduced In Congress

**Washington, DC, USA:** Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX), along with ten co-sponsors, has reintroduced legislation in Congress that would allow for the commercial farming of industrial hemp. Hemp is a distinct variety of the plant species cannabis sativa that

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**Prohibition-Oriented Policies Do Not Deter Adolescent Marijuana Use, Study Says**  
***"The data provides no evidence that strict cannabis laws ... provide protective effects"***

**Bethesda, MD, USA:** The enforcement of strict anti-cannabis laws is not associated with a reduction in the prevalence of adolescent marijuana use, according to international survey data to be published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*.

Investigators from the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands reviewed the self-reported use of marijuana and alcohol among nearly 5,000 10th graders in all three nations. Researchers reported that youth cannabis rates "did not differ across countries" despite widely disparate legal policies.

In the United States, **33 percent** of 10th grade boys and **26 percent** of 10th grade

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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

----- Making contact -----

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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](http://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 STIMULUS, page 1 > otherwise law-abiding cannabis consumers who are ready, willing, vocal and able to contribute needed tax revenue to America's struggling economy," St Pierre told reporters from *Salon*, *Fox News*, *Sirius Satellite Radio*, and other media outlets. "All we ask in exchange for our \$14 billion is that our government respects our decision to use marijuana privately and responsibly."

In March, during President Barack Obama's first-ever Internet Town Hall, questions pertaining to whether legalizing marijuana like alcohol could help boost the economy received more votes from the public than did any other topic. Since then, numerous high-profile media pundits – including Joe Klein (*Time Magazine*), David Sirota (*The Nation*), Clarence Page (*Chicago Tribune*) and Jack Cafferty (*Salon*) – have called on the administration to consider legalizing marijuana.

"America is in the midst of an economic recession," NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said. "Taxing and regulating marijuana in a manner like alcohol – with state-licensed sales and age restrictions – would redirect criminal justice costs toward more serious crimes, raise tax revenue, and greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the involvement of drug cartels in the illicit marijuana trade."

According to a 2007 economic analysis, the total retail value of the U.S. marijuana market is more than \$113 billion per year – making pot the nation's most lucrative cash crop.

Presently, lawmakers in California and Massachusetts are debating statewide measures to tax and regulate the production and sale of cannabis to adults.

*For more information, please contact either Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500, or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.*

<continued from HEMP, page 1 > contains only trace (less than one percent) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive compound in marijuana.

House Bill 1866, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009, would exclude low potency varieties of cannabis from the federal Controlled Substances Act. If approved, the measure would grant state legislatures the authority to license and regulate the commercial production of hemp as an industrial and agricultural commodity.

Several states – including North Dakota, Montana, and Vermont – have enacted regulations to allow for the cultivation of hemp under state law. However, none of these laws can be implemented without federal approval. Passage of HR 1866 would remove existing federal barriers and allow states that wish to regulate commercial hemp production the authority to do so.

Upon introducing the bill in Congress, Rep. Paul said: "It is unfortunate that the federal government has stood in the way of American farmers, including many who are struggling to make ends meet, from competing in the global industrial hemp market. Indeed, the founders of our nation, some of whom grew hemp, would surely find that federal restrictions on farmers growing a safe and profitable crop on their own land are inconsistent with the constitutional guarantee of a limited, restrained federal government. ... I urge my colleagues to stand up for American farmers and cosponsor the Industrial Hemp Farming Act."

Previous versions of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act were introduced in both the 108th and 109th Congress, but failed to receive a public hearing or a committee vote.

According to a 2005 Congressional Research Service report, "The United States is the only developed nation in which industrial hemp is not an established crop."

*For more information about House Bill 1866, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009, please*

*visit:*  
<http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=13073826> or go to:

<http://www.votehemp.org>

<continued from POLICY, page 1 > girls reported using cannabis during the past year.

In Canada, where marijuana is similarly prohibited but anti-pot laws are seldomly enforced, **32 percent** of boys and **31 percent** of girls said they'd used marijuana in the previous year.

And in the Netherlands, where the sale of cannabis is legally regulated for those over 18 years of age, **29 percent** of 10th grade boy and just **20 percent** of girls said that they had used pot in the past year.

"Surprisingly, there was little evidence of correspondence between cannabis prevalence and policy," authors determined. "These data are consistent with reports showing that [the] use of cannabis is no higher in the Netherlands than in the United States, and inconsistent with the demand theory idea that strict laws and enforcement prevent adolescent cannabis use. More importantly, the data are inconsistent with the contention that decriminalization policies encourage adolescent cannabis use."

Investigator concluded: "The data provide no evidence that strict cannabis laws in the United States provide protective effects compared to similarly restrictive but less vigorously enforced laws in place in Canada, and the regulated access approach in the Netherlands. Given the cross-sectional nature of the research, the data provide no evidence of a causal association between national policies and substance use."

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Cross-national comparison of adolescent drinking and cannabis use in the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands," will appear in the International Journal of Drug Policy.*

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### **NORML Launches First Ever Nationwide Television Ad Campaign, "Legalization – Yes We Can!"**

**Washington, DC, USA:** On Monday, April 20th, NORML launched the first nationwide television ad campaign calling for the regulation of cannabis for adults.

The one-minute advertisement, entitled "Legalization: Yes We Can," calls on the President and Congress to repeal the federal prohibition of marijuana. It states: "You can tax it. You can regulate it; apply age restrictions. You can create millions of new jobs. ... President Obama, it's time for legalization. Yes we can!"

An online 'rough cut' of the advertisement is available for viewing at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0mEDE\\_w1xo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0mEDE_w1xo).

NORML purchased over 7,500 ad buys on over 200 national cable providers. The advertisement will appear on various cable networks in all 50 states, including CNN, CNBC, Fox News, Fuse, FX Networks, G4, MSNBC, CNN Headline News, and Spike TV.

NORML's ad was produced by New Jersey independent filmmaker Jason Druss. Druss submitted the public service announcement as part of NORML's 2009 online ad contest. Druss' entry was selected by the public as the contest's grand-prize winner, besting over 80 other finalists.

"NORML's national advertising campaign epitomizes the growing public support for marijuana law reform, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said. "This is a grassroots, organic campaign. NORML's ad was produced by and voted on by the public. Even more importantly, all of the money raised to sponsor this national ad buy was donated to NORML by the general public. These ads are on television because thousands of Americans are demanding an end to the criminal prohibition of marijuana.

By contrast, St. Pierre said that the US Congress and the White House Office of Drug Control Policy typically spend close to \$100 million annually to produce and air advertisements stigmatizing the use of cannabis and its effects.

"Americans are voting with their wallets to

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<continued from previous page> repeal the government's ongoing war on weed, St. Pierre said. "They are willing to donate their hard earned dollars to produce advertisements that run contrary to the federal government's misleading, multimillion dollar public service campaign.

Three recent nationwide polls – one by CBS News, one by Zogby, and one by Rasmussen Reports – have each reported that the public's support for legally regulating cannabis is at an all-time high. Most recently, a California field poll sponsored by Oaksterdam University in Oakland found that 58 percent of state voters back regulating marijuana for adults in a manner similar to alcohol.

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Deputy Director, at: (202) 483-5500.*

### **Oakland: City's Pending Medical Marijuana Tax Could Raise "Millions" In Revenue**

**Oakland, CA, USA:** A proposal to increase the business tax on city-licensed medical cannabis dispensaries has won approval from an Oakland City Council committee and will now be voted on by the full council. If approved by the Council, the issue will likely go before municipal voters this summer.

The proposal would raise the tax paid by dispensary operators for every \$1,000 in gross receipts from \$1.20 to as much as \$24.

Council members estimate that the new tax could raise anywhere from \$400,000 to a "couple million" dollars in city revenue annually.

Four state-licensed dispensaries operate in Oakland.

Oakland attorney James Anthony, legal counsel for the Harborside Health Center dispensary and a member of the NORML Legal Committee, told the *Oakland Tribune* that "paying a higher

tax rate could show the 120 jurisdictions across the state that have banned medical marijuana sales that 'medical cannabis dispensaries are good neighbors' that can help provide cities with revenue."

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or visit: <http://www.canorml.org>.*

### **US Senators Introduce National Criminal Justice Act of 2009 Bill would "undertake a comprehensive review of the criminal justice system"**

**Washington, DC, USA:** Senators Jim Webb (D-VA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA), along with fifteen co-sponsors, have introduced legislation in Congress to critically evaluate America's drugs and prisons policies. The bill, Senate Bill 714, the National Criminal Justice Commission Act of 2009, is now before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

As introduced, the proposal would establish a blue-ribbon commission to "undertake a comprehensive review of the criminal justice system; make findings related to current Federal and State criminal justice policies and practices; and make reform recommendations for the President, Congress, and State governments to improve public safety, cost-effectiveness, overall prison administration, and fairness in the implementation of the Nation's criminal justice system."

Specifically, the Commission will examine "current drug policy and its impact on incarceration, crime and violence, sentencing, and reentry programs, [including] an analysis of the general availability of drugs in our society, the impact and effectiveness of current policies on reducing that availability and on the incidence of crime, and in the case of criminal offenders, the availability of drug treatment programs before, during, and after incarceration."

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Writing this past weekend in *Parade Magazine*, Sen. Webb stated: "Drug offenders, most of them passive users or minor dealers, are swamping our prisons. ... Justice statistics ... show that 47.5% of all the drug arrests in our country in 2007 were for marijuana offenses. "America's criminal justice system has deteriorated to the point that it is a national disgrace. Its irregularities and inequities cut against the notion that we are a society founded on fundamental fairness. ... It is incumbent on our national leadership to find a way to fix our prison system."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500. Additional information about Senate Bill 714 is available from NORML's Take Action Center at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=13046001>.

## Mexican Lawmakers Consider Legalizing Marijuana

**Mexico City, Mexico:** Mexican lawmakers engaged in a three-day debate this week regarding whether to legalize the personal possession of marijuana. The debate concluded just prior to the arrival of U.S. President Barack Obama, who is visiting Mexico this week to discuss ways to stem the rising violence associated with the trafficking of illicit substances by drug cartels.

According to the *Associated Press*, marijuana is the "biggest source of income" for Mexican drug gangs.

Last month, Obama stated publicly that he did not support regulating cannabis.

In 2006, Mexican lawmakers approved legislation to decriminalize minor drug possession offenses – effectively eliminating criminal penalties for the possession of small quantities of cannabis and other controlled substances. However, then-President Vincente

Fox rejected the measure after receiving complaints from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and the State Department, which warned that the policy could promote "drug tourism."

Speaking this past Sunday on CBS's *Face The Nation*, Mexican Ambassador to the United States Arturo Sarukhan said that legalizing marijuana might mitigate drug-related violence.

"This is a debate that needs to be taken seriously – that we have to engage in on both sides of the border," he said. "It is a debate that has to be taken on with seriousness."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.

## Maine: Initiative To Expand State's Medical Marijuana Law To Go Before Voters In November

**Augusta, ME, USA:** A proposal seeking to amend Maine's decade-old medical marijuana law will go before voters this November.

Sponsored by Maine Citizens for Patients' Rights, the Maine Marijuana Medical Act seeks to expand the state's medical marijuana law by establishing a confidential patient registry, and by allowing for the creation of non-profit state-licensed nonprofit dispensaries to assist in the distribution of medical cannabis to qualified patients.

The proposal's proponents gathered over 55,000 signatures from Maine voters to place the issue on the 2009 ballot.

Last week, members of the legislature's Health and Human Services Committee voted 8 to zero to reject the measure – electing instead to put it before a statewide vote.

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<continued from previous page> In 1999, 61 percent of state voters approved the physician-supervised use of medical marijuana. However, the law did not establish a state identification registry for qualified patients, nor did it address regulating the distribution of medical marijuana.

"With close to 75% support on this issue here in state, we anticipate a quiet campaign with little opposition, initiative coordinator Jonathan Leavitt said. "Maine voters have already spoken loudly on this issue and we anticipate that after the vote in November, qualified patients will now have full access to their medicine and the necessary protections to utilize it.

To date a handful of states, including California and New Mexico, allow for the distribution of medical marijuana by third parties.

*For more information, please visit: <http://www.mainepatientsrights.org/>. An interview with Jonathan Leavitt is available for download on the April 21 edition of the NORML Audio Stash at: [http://audio.norml.org/audio\\_stash/NORML\\_Daily\\_AudioStash\\_2009-04-21.mp3](http://audio.norml.org/audio_stash/NORML_Daily_AudioStash_2009-04-21.mp3).*

## **Concurrent Use Of Cannabis And Cigarettes Associated With COPD, Study Says**

**Vancouver, British Columbia:** Individuals who regularly smoke cigarettes and marijuana experience a greater likelihood of developing symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) than do individuals who smoke cigarettes only, according to the results of a population-based study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

Investigators at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, British Columbia, surveyed a random sample of 878 people aged 40 years or older about their respiratory history and their history of tobacco and marijuana smoking.

Researchers reported that the concurrent use of

tobacco and marijuana was associated with an increased risk of COPD. They determined that cigarette-only smokers were approximately two-and-a-half times more likely than nonsmokers to develop COPD, while those subjects who reported smoking both substances were approximately three times more likely to develop the disease.

"The risks of respiratory symptoms and of COPD were related to a synergistic interaction between marijuana and tobacco," they concluded.

By contrast, investigators found that "smoking only marijuana was not associated with an increased risk of respiratory symptoms or COPD."

An accompanying commentary by UCLA pulmonary investigator Donald Tashkin added, "Given the consistently reported absence of an association between use of marijuana and abnormal diffusing capacity or signs of macroscopic emphysema, we can be close to concluding that smoking marijuana by itself does not lead to COPD."

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: [paul@norml.org](mailto:paul@norml.org). Full text of the study, "Marijuana and chronic obstructive lung disease: a population-based study," is online at: <http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/180/8/814>*

## **Marijuana Compounds Have "Palliative" And "Curative" Effects On Cancer**

**Salerno, Italy:** Naturally occurring compounds in cannabis possess anti-tumor properties and present a novel approach for cancer treatment, according to a scientific review published in the February issue of the journal *Best Practice & Research: Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

Investigators at the University of Salerno in Italy report that cannabinoids limit cancer cell

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<continued from MARIJUANA COMPOUNDS HAVE "PALLIATIVE" AND "CURATIVE" EFFECTS ON CANCER, previous page> proliferation and induce tumor-selective cell death.

Cannabinoids inhibit "tumor growth and migration, angiogenesis (the formation of new blood vessels to cancerous tumors), [and] metastasis (the transfer of malignant cells from one site to another)," authors concluded. "Emerging evidence suggests that agonists of cannabinoid receptors ... may offer a novel strategy to treat cancer."

A 2008 review in the journal *Cancer Research* reported that the administration of cannabinoids halts the spread of a wide range of cancers, including brain cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer, lung cancer, skin cancer, pancreatic cancer, and lymphoma.

To date, only one clinical trial assessing the use of cannabinoids as anti-cancer agents has been conducted. That trial reported that THC administration decreases recurrent glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) tumor growth in patients afflicted with the disease.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Use of cannabinoid receptor agonists in cancer therapy as palliative and curative agents," appears in the journal Best Practice & Research: Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism. Additional information on the anti-cancer properties of cannabinoids appears online at: [http://www.norml.org//index.cfm?Group\\_ID=7008](http://www.norml.org//index.cfm?Group_ID=7008).*

**\* 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>**



***It's One Hell of A Joint!***

Visit - <http://herbstoastedsubs.com/> - and see!

### **Michigan: State Medical Marijuana Program Now Accepting Applicants**

**Lansing, MI, USA:** As of Saturday, April 4, patients may begin seeking applications to register with the Michigan Medical Marijuana Program. Patients in the program are permitted under state law to possess and grow cannabis for medical purposes.

Sixty-three percent of state voters approved an initiative establishing the program last November. Michigan is the thirteenth state to enact legislation allowing for the physician-supervised use of marijuana under state law.

Administrative rules for the program are available from the Michigan Department of Community Health. The website also has application instructions and forms online. *For more information, please see:*

**<http://Michigan.gov/mmp>**

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