



'Gold Standard' Studies Show That Inhaled Marijuana Is Medically Safe And Effective; State-Funded Clinical Trials Show Cannabis Eases Neuropathic Pain And Spasticity, Landmark Report Says

Sacramento, CA, USA:

The results of a series of randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials assessing the efficacy of inhaled marijuana consistently show that cannabis holds therapeutic value comparable to conventional medications, according to the findings of a 24-page report issued Wednesday to the California state legislature by the California Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research (CMCR).

Four of the five placebo-controlled trials demonstrated that marijuana significantly alleviated neuropathy, a difficult to treat type of pain resulting from nerve damage.

"There is good evidence now that cannabinoids (the active compounds in the marijuana plant) may be

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CBS Corporation Bars NORML From Advertising On Times Square Billboard; NORML Told: "If CBS changes their morals we will let you know"

Washington, DC, USA:

Representatives from the CBS Corporation and Neutron Media Screen Marketing have rejected a paid advertisement from the NORML Foundation, the educational arm of the National Organization of Marijuana Laws (NORML), that was intended to appear on the CBS Super Screen billboard in New York City's Times Square.

The fifteen-second ad, which asserts that taxing and regulating the adult use and sale of marijuana would raise 'billions of dollars in national revenue, was scheduled to appear on CBS's 42nd Street

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Marijuana Use Growing In Popularity Among Older Americans, U.S. Government Study Says Nearly 10 Percent Of Men Age 50 To 54 Now Using Pot

Rockville, MD, USA:

Americans over age 50 are using marijuana in greater numbers, according to survey data compiled by the United States Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA).

Among men age 50 to 54, nearly 9 percent admitted to having used marijuana within the past year. Among males age 50 to 60, over four percent said that they had used cannabis.

Commenting on the study's findings, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said, "While the federal government refuses to acknowledge that

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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**

Willamette Valley NORML is your local network in 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 **MARIJUANA IS MEDICALLY SAFE AND EFFECTIVE, page 1** > either an adjunct or a first-line treatment for ... neuropathy," said Dr. Igor Grant, Director of the CMCR, at a news conference at the state Capitol. He added that the efficacy of smoked marijuana was "very consistent," and that its pain-relieving effects were "comparable to the better existing treatments" presently available by prescription.

A fifth study showed that smoked cannabis reduced the spasticity associated with multiple sclerosis. A separate study conducted by the CMCR established that the vaporization of cannabis – a process that heats the substance to a temperature where active cannabinoid vapors form, but below the point of combustion – is a "safe and effective" delivery mode for patients who desire the rapid onset of action associated with inhalation while avoiding the respiratory risks of smoking.

Two additional clinical trials remain ongoing.

The CMCR program was founded in 2000 following an \$8.7 million appropriation from the California state legislature. The studies are some of the first placebo-controlled clinical trials to assess the safety and efficacy of inhaled cannabis as a medicine to take place in over two decades.

Placebo-controlled clinical crossover trials are considered to be the 'gold standard' method for assessing the efficacy of drugs under the US FDA-approval process.

"These scientists created an unparalleled program of systematic research, focused on science-based answers rather than political or social beliefs," said former California Senator John Vasconcellos, who sponsored the legislation in 1999 to launch the CMCR. Vasconcellos called the studies' design "state of art," and suggested that the CMCR's findings "ought to settle the issue" of whether or not medical marijuana is a safe and effective medical treatment for patients.

"This (report) confirms all of the anecdotal

evidence – how lives have been saved and pain has been eased," said California Democrat Sen. Mark Leno at the press conference. "Now we have the science to prove it."

Full text of the CMCR's report to the California legislature is available at online at: http://www.cmcr.ucsd.edu/CMCR_REPORT_EB17.pdf.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org, or Dale Gieringer, California NORML Coordinator, at: <http://www.canorml.org> or (415) 563-5858.

<continued from **CBS BARS NORML, page 1** > digital billboard beginning on Monday, February 1, 2010.

Representatives from Neutron Media approached NORML in mid-January about placing the ad, which was scheduled to air 18 times per day for a two-month period. The NORML Foundation entered into a contractual agreement with Neutron Media to air two separate NORML advertisements, and produced an initial ad exclusively for broadcast on the CBS digital billboard.

Days after NORML's submitted the ad, the organization received the following e-mail, dated February 3, from a representative from Neutron Media stated: "I just received word from CBS and they will not approve your ad. If CBS changes their morals we will let you know."

NORML's 15-second animated advertisement is available online here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tqW9Kj8DVU>

Commenting on CBS' last minute rejection of the ad, NORML Foundation Executive Allen St. Pierre said, "Major media corporations like CBS have no problem airing programming that allows them to profit off the public's interest in marijuana and

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<continued from previous page> marijuana law reform, such as Showtime's hit series Weeds and the CBSnews.com online series 'Marijuana Nation.' Yet these same corporate entities balk at airing media that calls on reforming America's criminal marijuana policies – policies that have led directly to the arrest of over 20 million Americans since 1965. How can advocates be expected to change these failed policies when those that control America's airwaves refuse to allow them a public forum to voice their point of view?"

According to the results of a December 2009 Angus Reid survey, fifty-three percent of Americans now support legalizing marijuana.

St. Pierre continued: "University studies show that regulating the adult use of marijuana in a manner similar to alcohol would raise over \$30 billion annually in new tax revenue, while saving an addition \$15 billion per year in law enforcement costs. The content of NORML's ad is based on sound, readily identifiable data. Moreover, the message of NORML's advertisement is supported by a majority of the public. CBS' denial of this ad spot is based on the company's political and cultural bias and nothing more."

Last summer NORML entered into negotiations with CBS to launch a live Saturday night radio broadcast on the corporation's ChatAboutIt.com talk radio network. CBS representatives initially agreed to the programming, but then abruptly canceled the contract after NORML had raised the funding to produce its first show.

In 2009, the NORML Foundation launched the first-ever nationwide television ad campaign calling for the regulation of marijuana by adults. The Foundation purchased over 7,500 ad buys on prominent cable networks like CNBC, Fox News, G4, and FX. The ad campaign did not air on CBS-affiliated networks. For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

NORML's ad is available for viewing on YouTube.com at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tqW9Kj8DVU>

<continued from MARIJUANA USE GROWING, page 1 > marijuana has a legitimate role as a medicine, in particular one that can offset many of the symptoms and conditions associated with aging, it is nevertheless apparent that a growing percentage of the public – and older Americans especially – are becoming increasingly aware of this plant's safety and efficacy."

Among females age 50 to 54, four percent admitted to having used pot in the previous year.

"This new data has profound implications for the health and well-being of older adults who continue to abuse substances," a SAMHSA representative stated in a press release. "These findings highlight the need for prevention programs for all ages as well as to establish improved screening and appropriate referral to treatment as part of routine health care services."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org, or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at: (202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Illicit Drug Use Among Older Adults," is available online from SAMHSA at: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k9/168/168OlderAdults.cfm>.

Over 2,500 Subjects Since 2005 Have Used Marijuana-Based Medicines In Controlled Clinical Trials

Hurth, Germany: Researchers worldwide have performed 37 separate clinical trials assessing the therapeutic safety and efficacy of inhaled cannabis and marijuana-based medicines since 2005, according to a review published online last week in the journal

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<continued from previous page> *Cannabinoids: The Journal of the International Association for Cannabinoid Medicines* (IACM).

Investigators from Leiden University in the Netherlands and the nova-Institut in Germany conducted a systematic review of recent clinical trial data pertaining to the medical use of whole smoked marijuana and cannabinoids.

Authors identified 37 controlled studies since 2005 evaluating the therapeutic effects of cannabinoids. The trials involved a total of 2,563 subjects.

Of the 37 clinical trials that have been recently conducted, eleven assessed the drug's impact on chronic neuropathic pain – a difficult to treat type of pain resulting from nerve damage. Other studies assessed the efficacy of cannabinoids to treat multiple sclerosis-associated spasticity (nine separate studies); HIV/AIDS (four); experimental pain (four); intestinal dysfunction (two); nausea/vomiting/appetite (two); schizophrenia (two); glaucoma (one); and 'other indications' (two).

Authors concluded, "Based on the clinical results, cannabinoids present an interesting therapeutic potential mainly as analgesics in chronic neuropathic pain, appetite stimulants in debilitating diseases (cancer and AIDS), as well as in the treatment of multiple sclerosis."

Last Wednesday investigators from the California Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research released the results of a series of double blind, placebo-controlled trials that determined that cannabinoids could be "a first-line treatment" for patients suffering from neuropathy.

Commenting on the review, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said: "The safety and efficacy of marijuana as a medicine has now been established by the 'gold standard' of clinical study. Further, over 2,500 patients have used cannabinoids in controlled clinical trials over the past five years alone. This is a far greater total than the number of subjects that

would likely be administered any other new drug pending United States FDA approval, and is a large enough population to once and for all establish marijuana's objective value as a medicine."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Review of clinical studies with cannabis and cannabinoids 2005-2009," is available online from the International Association of Cannabinoid Medicines at: <http://www.cannabis-med.org>.

Vermont Lawmakers Debate Medical Marijuana Distribution Plan

Montpelier, VT, USA: State lawmakers heard testimony last week in support for establishing state authorized medical marijuana dispensaries.

Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations heard arguments in favor of Senate Bill 226, which allows for not-for-profit 'compassion centers,' to "acquire, possess, cultivate, manufacture, deliver, transfer, transport, supply, sell, and dispense marijuana related supplies, and educational materials" to state-qualified patients.

Passage of this measure would not amend existing state law permitting qualified patients to cultivate marijuana for their own medical use, or to designate a caregiver to cultivate marijuana for them.

In 2004, state lawmakers approved legislation allowing qualified patients to possess and cultivate marijuana for medicinal purposes.

State-licensed medical marijuana dispensaries are operating in New Mexico, and have recently been approved in Maine, New Jersey, and Rhode Island.

For more information, please visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.

DC Lawmakers Debate Authorizing Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

Washington, DC, USA: District of Columbia City Council members held their first hearing on Thursday regarding legislation to authorize the legal use and distribution of medical marijuana.

Members of the DC City Council Committees on Health and Public Safety jointly heard public testimony regarding B 18-622, the Legalization of Marijuana for Medical Treatment Initiative Amendment Act Of 2010, which seeks to allow for the licensed production and distribution of cannabis to authorized patients.

The measure would implement components of Initiative 59 – a 1998 DC ballot measure that garnered 69 percent of the vote. However, until this year DC city lawmakers have been barred from instituting the measure because of a Congressional ban on the issue.

Congress lifted its ban late last year.

Testifying before the Committee, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said: "The goals of Initiative 59 were threefold: To provide physicians with the legal authority to recommend marijuana as a therapy to those patients for whom they believed would benefit from its medical use; to legally protect patients who use marijuana under a doctor's supervision from criminal arrest or prosecution; and to provide patients with legal, safe, affordable above ground access to medical marijuana. While NORML commends the efforts of the DC City Council to implement safe and reasonable medical marijuana regulations, these efforts must not run contrary to the intentions of I-59, as unambiguously expressed by 69 percent of DC's voters."

Council members stated that the measure would likely be passed by May of this year. If approved by the Council, Congress has 30 days to either approve or reject the measure.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500. For additional information regarding B 18-622, please visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=14635551>.

Washington: Senate Lawmakers Expand Medical Marijuana Law

Olympia, WA, USA: Senate lawmakers voted 37 to 11 last week to expand Washington's nearly twelve-year-old medical marijuana law.

Senators approved S.B. 5798, which allows certain health care professionals – including naturopaths, physician's assistants, osteopathic physicians, and advanced registered nurse practitioners – to legally recommend marijuana therapy to their patients.

Under present law, only licensed physicians may legally recommend medicinal cannabis.

The measure now awaits action from House lawmakers. The measure is scheduled to be heard before members of the House Committee on Health Care & Wellness on Thursday, February 18, 2010. *For more information, please visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.*

New Hampshire: Committee Approves Marijuana Decriminalization Measure

Concord, NH, USA: Members of the House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee voted 16 to 2 on Thursday in favor of legislation to reduce marijuana possession penalties to a civil infraction.

As amended, House Bill 1653 would reduce the penalties for minor marijuana possession offenses (up to 1/4 of one ounce) from a

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The measure now awaits action from the full House.

To date, 13 states have decriminalized the possession of marijuana for personal use.

For more information, please visit: <http://nhcommonsense.org>, or visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.

Rhode Island: Decriminalizing Marijuana Could Save Nearly One Quarter Of A Million Dollars Annually

Providence, RI, USA: Legislation introduced by lawmakers this week to decriminalize marijuana possession offenses would save taxpayers an estimated one quarter of a million dollars annually in incarceration costs.

On Tuesday lawmakers introduced House Bill 7317, which would reduce penalties for minor marijuana possession offenses from a criminal misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$500 fine, to a civil offense punishable by no more than a \$150 fine. Similar legislation is pending in New Hampshire and Washington.

To date, 13 states have decriminalized the possession marijuana for nonmedical use.

Speaking before a special legislative commission in January, Rhode Island Department of Corrections Director A. T. Wall told lawmakers that decriminalizing marijuana possession offenses would save \$232,000 in prison costs annually.

The special legislative task force is conducting an ongoing review of the state's marijuana policies. The nine-member panel is required to issue its recommendations to the legislature by March 31, 2010.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. For additional information regarding HB 7317, please visit NORML's 'Take Action Center' at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/>.

Marijuana Legalization Questions Excluded From YouTube Presidential Forum

Washington, DC, USA: Moderators of a February 1 live YouTube debate with President Barack Obama failed to ask any questions regarding marijuana policy, even though the topic was the top vote getter on the website's Citizen Tube/State of the Union poll.

Members of the public submitted over 14,000 questions to the site, which had promised to pose the most popular questions to the President. The three questions that gained the highest total of public votes all pertained to legalizing marijuana.

YouTube representatives have not provided any official explanation as to why the questions were omitted from the debate.

In 2009, publicly submitted questions regarding marijuana legalization topped several other White House related polls, including surveys conducted by Change.org and WhiteHouse.gov.

Commenting on the poll results NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said: "Marijuana legalization is not a political liability; it is a political opportunity. It is unfortunate that the majority of politicians still fail to acknowledge this fact."

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



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

Review: Supposed Marijuana And Schizophrenia Link "Overstated"

Bristol, United Kingdom: Clinical evidence indicating that marijuana use may be casually linked to incidences of schizophrenia or other Psychological harms is not compelling, according to a scientific review published online by the journal *Addiction*.

Investigators at the University of Bristol, Department of Social Medicine assessed the potential health risks of cannabis, particularly whether use of the drug may be causally linked with mental illness.

Authors wrote: "We continue to take the view that the evidence that cannabis use causes schizophrenia is neither very new, nor by normal criteria, particularly compelling. ... For example, our recent modeling suggests that we would need to prevent between 3000 and 5000 cases of heavy cannabis use among young men and women to prevent one case of schizophrenia, and that four or five times more young people would need to avoid light cannabis use to prevent a single schizophrenia case. ... We conclude that the strongest evidence of a possible causal relation between cannabis use and schizophrenia emerged more than 20 years ago and that the strength of more recent evidence may have been overstated."

In 2007, an analysis in the British medical journal *The Lancet* estimated that experimenting with marijuana could increase one's risk of developing a psychotic illness later in life by some 40 percent. Following this report, Parliament in 2008 voted to reclassify marijuana as a Class B substance, making its possession punishable by up to five years in prison.

*** 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!

University of Bristol researchers also criticized Parliament's reclassification of the drug, which took effect earlier this year. They concluded: "The only important possible benefit of prohibition is prevention of cannabis use. There is little or no evidence that it effectively achieves this benefit. Patterns of cannabis use in the population appear to be independent of the policy surrounding use, and criminalizing individual cannabis users does not appear to modify their use in a healthy way."

Overall, investigators determined that marijuana's most significant health risk was its association and reinforcement with tobacco smoking. *For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the review, "How ideology shapes the evidence and the policy: what do we know about cannabis use and what should we do," appears online in the journal *Addiction*.*

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