

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

Miss Megan Burke

Organisation Name:

Your position or role:

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria to consider::

Accessing and using cannabis,Public health,Criminal activity,Mental health,Young people and children,Public safety,Education,Social impacts

What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :

Individual

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

The Economic benefit

Select all that apply. Do you think there should be restrictions on the use of cannabis? :

Personal use of cannabis should be legal. ,Sale of cannabis should be legal and regulated. ,Cultivation of cannabis for personal use should be legal.

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

I'm passionately in support of ending marijuana prohibition, I believe that a change in legislation that allows for recreational use of marijuana in addition to opening the market for CBD products (food, drinks, skincare etc.) is a decision in Victoria's best interest. The issues presented in the Terms Of Reference are valid, and as counter-intuitive as it may seem to some, ending Marijuana prohibition will actively lessen the issues mentioned.

TOR a. Currently in Australia, it is easier for a minor to find access to marijuana than it is for them to find access to alcohol and tobacco products. I've personally seen the ease at which minors aged 13-17 years old can find dealers and purchase cannabis, out of the people I know who have had marijuana, a surprising amount had their first joint before their first drink. It's just a lot more difficult for a teenager to find the 3rd party, an adult willing to risk the consequences of supplying alcohol to a minor, than it is for a teenager to just directly approach a marijuana dealer who is already comfortable breaking the law; this also applies to other illicit drugs. When the government are able to control the direct sale of the marijuana, it becomes easier to restrict its access to minors in the same way it works for alcohol and cigarettes.

TOR b. We already have methods to detect and punish people who drive on drugs and alcohol, and pre-existing laws regarding public intoxication. It's also worth mentioning that there have never been any recorded cases of excess consumption of marijuana being a direct cause of death. Marijuana is already the most widely used illicit drug, and is still less of detriment to public health and safety than alcohol or cigarettes.

TOR b & d. The period of alcohol prohibition is a time in US history where violent, gang related crime surged and the consumption of hard liquor was the preferred beverage. The alcohol market existed regardless of regulation or legality. Without regulation and legality, suppliers lacked access to the law to solve disputes, leaving fear, violence and brutality as the preferred method to protect their business. Without laws or

regulations, it also became more cost-effective to produce and transport high concentration alcohol, and also allowed counterfeit and dangerous alcohol to be produced without consequences; prohibition made alcohol itself more dangerous to consume. These are all the same problems that also effect the marijuana market. As much as we want to believe that prohibiting these substances protects people, it actively makes communities less safe.

TOR e: It's true that people suffering from mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression may turn to marijuana to self medicate, its also true that marijuana can be addictive just like alcohol, social media, pornography and gambling can be. Marijuana being legal or illegal doesn't change that mental health needs to be treated as seriously as physical health and requires more widely accessable resources- particually within the education system. I'm sure the families of people suffering from mental illnesses will be more at ease when they know that, at the very least, their child/sibling won't be thrown in jail for trying to cope with their anxiety.

I'm more than willing to speak in front of the committee making this decison and elaborate further on my points. I care deeply about opening up the freedoms of Victorians, and I believe eliminating marijuana prohibition is in everyone's best interests.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Megan Burke