

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

Mr Lewis Edwards

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

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

Individual

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

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.,There should be no restrictions.

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

My perception is that cannabis is objectively a less harmful drug than alcohol or tobacco, and remains illicit largely for historical and economic reasons.

I have a stack of psychiatric problems, but have found occasional cannabis use has no negative impact on them. I've now been stable on my ordinary psychiatric medication for 16 years continuously, and periods of abstinence or indulgence have not had a long-term impact on my depression, mania or psychosis at all.

My perception is that the average Australian is at least indifferent towards, and in many cases actively supportive of cannabis legalisation. The group that actively campaigns against it is a vocal minority.

I'm inclined to believe that the concerns about even moderate use having an impact on mental health are direct descendants of Reefer Madness-era moral panics. Beliefs that cannabis preparations cause some form of insanity date back to the 1930s, and have been continuously present in the public discourse since then (though you'll note that the exact form of insanity has been continuously downgraded from "instant permanent psychosis" in the 30s, all the way down to "slightly increased chance of depression" today).

I'm equally inclined to believe that the major force preventing Australian society from passing meaningful cannabis reform is the financial interest of the alcohol and tobacco industries, which stand to lose large amounts of market share from any decriminalisation or legalisation.

It's critical to understand that their loss is society's gain: cannabis **might** increase your risk of depression, but alcohol **very clearly** invokes spiralling addiction, violence and economic and family collapse in a substantial fraction of the population.

Even among people that use both alcohol and cannabis, you'll find that their propensity towards violence is greatly reduced compared to alcohol alone. Cannabis preparations do not cause the problems associated with alcoholism, and the new and unique problems they cause are largely limited to laziness and an affinity towards carbohydrates in most cases.

Victoria has nothing to lose and everything to gain by outright legalising cannabis. You will not see an epidemic of addiction, violence and ruined lives by doing this; on the contrary, you'll be helping undo some of these things that alcohol causes.

Side note: a few women close to me have mentioned that they have severe medical problems due to a range of conditions like endometriosis, PCOS and similar, and have stated that cannabis preparations are the only thing that helps.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Lewis Edwards