

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

Mr Luke Josh

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

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.

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

a)

It is not currently difficult to acquire cannabis in Victoria, I think most people know at least one person who would be able to get it for them, obviously all through illegal channels. I have not know people who sell cannabis to discriminate who they sell to, and I have personally been aware of vendors who's primary market is high school students.??With the right recreational purchasing structure, I believe it would become far more difficult for children to acquire cannabis. Provided that legal channels ("dispensaries") of accessing marijuana are not priced above the current "street price", I believe most people would seek their cannabis from these dispensaries, which would decrease the demand for illegal trade. Assuming that the sale of marijuana is regulated, requiring ID checks, I believe that this would result in a reduced rate of usage by minors, purely as it would be more difficult to acquire it. A study published in JAMA Pediatrics found that marijuana legalisation in various United States jurisdictions may cause a decline in use among youth, and also found no evidence that marijuana legalisation encourages usage in youths [1].

b)

In my opinion, cannabis usage will continue in Victoria regardless of decisions made by the government. It has been used for a long time in Australia, and even though it is illegal, many still choose to use it - I believe therefore, that it is logical to instead consider how we can best prevent the harmful effects of cannabis, and ensure that anyone who does choose to use cannabis is not a harm to themselves or others. I believe a large part of this begins with education. I think that any products containing cannabis should be required to be printed with their risks and potential harm that it can cause, much like how cigarettes are currently required to be packaged in Australia.

c)

I believe a more honest and open education into the dangers of drug use to children would put them in a

better position to make better decisions later on in life. My personal experience with drug education as a child was being told that all illicit substances were very bad, and were used by bad people, and altogether painted any drug use in a very negative light. I believe this style of education was detrimental to the attitude myself and my peers had towards drug use later on in life. After growing up and seeing cannabis being used first hand, I saw that it that altogether it made people more relaxed, calm, and happy; and most importantly, I have never personally witnessed anyone who I believe has had any long lasting negative effects from using it, nor have I ever seen any violence triggered by cannabis usage. I believe that grouping cannabis in with other much more harmful substances (e.g., cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, etc) for the purpose of drug education during my youth caused me to largely question how bad these harmful substances can be, after I saw how harmless, and even beneficial, cannabis usage was among my peers.

In high school, I was taught about the dangers of alcohol use; what alcohol poisoning is, and how to help someone experiencing it; some common myths, for example, that eating bread can soak up the alcohol in your stomach; and generally, how it can ruin peoples lives. I believe this education was rather effective, and I believe a similar style could work very well for cannabis. I believe we want to teach young people about the risks of using cannabis, that it can worsen several mental health conditions, cause anxiety, and cause you to accidentally eat a whole tub of ice cream in one sitting.

d) A paper written by the Reason Foundation[2] has several interesting insights into crime as a result of cannabis legalisation:

- * The amount of illegal production, distribution, and sale of cannabis is dramatically diminished
- * Opioid use sees a reduction, and the number of deaths due to opioid use saw a significant reduction
- * Crime rates tend to fall significantly in neighbourhoods where legal cannabis is sold
- * Violent crime may be reduced

It is hard to ignore these statistics. I believe the same effects could be seen in Victoria, should cannabis be legalised for recreational use.??

[1] <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2737637>

[2] <https://reason.org/wp-content/uploads/does-legalizing-marijuana-reduce-crime.pdf>

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

I think it is difficult to ignore the benefits recreational cannabis legalisation could have to our economy, especially considering the ongoing pandemic. This would create a whole new industry, new job opportunities and business prospects, and could also increase tourism.

Victoria is already such a beautiful place to live, and I genuinely believe legalising recreational cannabis is a step to making it even better.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Luke William Josh