

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

██████████

Organisation Name:

Your Position/Title:

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::

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

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

Individual

Do you think there should be restrictions on the use of cannabis? (select all that apply) :

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:

I am a long term consumer of cannabis, who has never lost a job, never shown signs of mental health issues, stolen from others or been violent towards others. I am not a criminal however the outdated laws we have force me to become one. Cannabis prohibition has been just as ineffective, inefficient, and problematic as alcohol prohibition is in the 1930's only it's exasperated by the length of prohibition. I have never personally met anyone (consumer or non consumer) in the 20 years I have consumed cannabis, who agrees with the laws and I am tired of being treated like a criminal and being forced to associate with criminals.

Cannabis is objectively less harmful than alcohol to the consumer and to society as proven in numerous studies. It is less toxic, less harmful to the body, less addictive, and less likely to contribute to violent or reckless behavior. Adults should not be punished for making the safer choice to use cannabis instead of alcohol, if that is what they prefer.

Regulating cannabis like alcohol will replace the uncontrolled illicit market with a tightly regulated system. By legalizing and regulating cannabis, authorities actually know who is selling it, where it is being sold, when, and to whom. In jurisdictions where cannabis is legal, it is produced and sold by legitimate, taxpaying businesses instead of drug cartels and criminals. These businesses will be required to test their products and adhere to strict labeling and packaging requirements that ensure cannabis is identifiable and consumers know what they are getting.

Government resources should not be wasted arresting and prosecuting cannabis consumers. Hundreds of thousands of Australians are arrested each year for cannabis-related offenses, the vast majority of which are for simple possession. Government resources could be better spent on things like renewable energy investments, going towards improving our roads or investing in human needs, such as social housing, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, and activities for at-risk individuals. Policing resources could be better used enforcing road safety.

Enforcement of cannabis prohibition laws disproportionately impacts communities and family's in low

income areas. This not only creates resentment and hostility from the community towards our law enforcement officials but also creates an environment where recidivism can and is easily justified.

Around the world in jurisdictions where cannabis is legal, it is produced and sold by legitimate, taxpaying businesses instead of drug cartels and criminals. These businesses will be required to test their products and adhere to strict labeling and packaging requirements that ensure cannabis is identifiable and consumers know what they are getting.

There are many ways to consume cannabis other than smoking or vaporizing, including edible products, tinctures, capsules, and topicals. Creating a legal, regulated market for a variety of products makes it easier for consumers to choose non-smoked options.

Most people in treatment for cannabis were ordered there by the criminal justice system. In other words, they didn't actually seek or need treatment, but were arrested and offered treatment as an alternative to jail time or other serious penalties.

Essentially, the government arrests people for using cannabis and forces them into treatment, and then it and other opponents of cannabis policy reform use those treatment admissions as "proof" that cannabis is addictive. The real scandal here is that countless needed treatment slots are being wasted on responsible cannabis users whose only problem with the drug was that they got caught with it.

Cannabis affects different people differently — like many substances, it can be problematic for some people and beneficial for others. The relationship between cannabis and schizophrenia is a lot like sugar and diabetes. Both illnesses are primarily genetic in origin. Sugar can set off a diabetic attack in vulnerable individuals, and cannabis can set off or worsen a psychotic reaction in schizophrenics or in people with a genetic predisposition to schizophrenia. That's not the same thing as causing the illness in the first place. There are some people who shouldn't use cannabis, just like there are some people who should avoid sugar. By having a regulated industry more rest and community response can be directed towards addressing mental health, community housing and identifying at risk individuals.

In conclusion I would like to reinforce the point at the beginning, I am a positive proactive member of the community who is tired of being treated like a criminal, being forced to associate with criminal and give money to criminals just because my government would rather I consume alcohol, the most destructive drug known, in place that often prone to violent incidents. Stop providing a financial gateway for criminals and start regulating cannabis like it needs to be.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

