

Christianne Andonovski

From: Inquiry into Drug Law Reform [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 17 March 2017 1:25 PM
To: LRRCS
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Drug Law Reform

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Drug Law Reform

Mr Steven Merriel
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] LRRCS - INQUIRY INTO DRUG LAW REFORM
[REDACTED] RECEIVED 17 MAR 2017
[REDACTED] SUBMISSION NO. 161

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

--

To the committee,

A large number of Australians, some sources say over 40% of the population, make use of recreational drugs or take prescription medications for non-prescription uses. This is despite these acts being illegal and drug enforcement being an ongoing focus of our law enforcement bodies. The evidence has been mounting that the current treatment of recreational drug use is ineffective. Attempting to deter drug users by threat of legal action is not only ineffective but expensive. Additionally making such activities illegal forces users into a situation where they are afraid to receive assistance when required due to possible legal ramifications, surely there is a better way.

Harm minimisation would be a far more effective approach to recreational drug use policy. Drug use is expected and the majority of users are only placed at risk through a lack of knowledge or a lack of access to support services. The government and community should focus on providing the public with factual, unbiased information about the effects of drug use, how to minimise personal risk when using and what to do if a negative event occurs. Such an approach where drug use is divillified and users are informed will mean that lives are saved and that individuals are able to make more of an informed choice when they use.

Currently Australia spends over \$1 billion dollars on drug law enforcement. Surely Victoria would prefer to take the portion of funds it contributes and spend it on education, harm minimisation and positive reforms that treat recreational drug use as a health issue and not a criminal issue.

I thank you for your consideration of my comments and ask that you recommend what is best for people's health, autonomy and economics.

Steven Merriel

--

File1:

File2:

File3: