

Christianne Andonovski

From: Celeste Biancofiore <wordpress@wp.greens.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 17 February 2017 4:12 PM
To: LRRCS
Subject: Ms Celeste Biancofiore

RE: INQUIRY INTO DRUG LAW REFORM

Ms Celeste Biancofiore

I was at the Rainbow Serpent festival this year, and was awoken in the morning to our neighbouring camper extremely anxious letting us know that the night before someone had died. He had not seen his friend since around 10pm that night and he had not returned to camp by 10am that morning. Thankfully his friend had just gotten lost and decided to sleep out near the stages, however Jacob Langford, the 22 year old that died was not so lucky. Although it was not pills directly that caused his passing it could just as likely have been. Drug culture is highly prevalent in not only festival atmospheres but in clubs all around Australia. I think it is absolutely vital that drug testing is made available to the community in order to prevent future fatalities and physical harm. Many argue that by providing a safe resource for individuals to test their pills, they are thereby promoting the use of drugs. However I and the majority of people I am closely associated with agree wholeheartedly that it is a better option to make the resources available to allow individuals to make an informed decision as to whether or not to use the narcotics. Morally i think it is deplorable that we are not even providing a chance of a more safe and friendly environment for all at such events due to the above argument when there are clear instances worldwide of it having an evidently positive effect. Research from Austria shows 50% of those who had their drugs tested said the results affected their consumption choices. Two-thirds said they wouldn't consume the drug and would warn friends in cases of negative results. Again people may see such statistics and still argue that pill testing is sending the wrong message. But it needs to be considered that the alternative message being sent is that we do not want to provide a way for consumers to be aware of what the substances they are taking, nor provide a way to potentially save hundreds of lives. So clearly this debate could go around in circles for years to come but the bottom line is that people will take drugs whether they know whats in them or not, the focus should be harm minimisation. Should we not be at least trialling pill testing for a period to ensure that users are as safe and informed as they possibly can be. Are the approximate 2,400 lives per year in Australia that are lost due to drug related death not argument enough to implement such a resource? And as for the potential minority that will consume when they wouldn't have otherwise, at least they too are much more likely to be safe when experimenting.

-- Celeste Biancofiore


I'm happy for my submission and details to be made public.