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From: Inquiry into Drug Law Reform [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 March 2017 1:26 PM
To: LRRCS
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Drug Law Reform

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Drug Law Reform

Mr Ben Yonson
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states:
Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
I believe the illegality of drugs deemed dangerous and unfit for human consumption by our current government is a breach of these civil rights. It is up to each informed individual to make a decision about the consumption of consciousness changing substances and a human right to experiment with our own consciousness. The laws in place now serve only to demonise and punish citizens of this country whose only illegal activity is consumption of illicit drugs for their own personal use. Drug addicts need to be treated as a health issue not a criminal one and the decriminalisation of drugs would achieve that.

The current laws operate on the assumption that if people have enough information and deterrents to drug use then they will discontinue their use. This strategy has been operating for half a century now and can safely be said to have failed. Drug use is still happening and our government's approach must change to harm minimalization. Portugal has the most progressive stance towards drug use and for 15 years they have reaped the benefits of harm minimalization policies. Decreased deaths from drug overdose and income saved from police efforts into prohibition which can be spent elsewhere are only two of the positive impacts of Portugal's policies. The statistics are there, decriminalisation and policies created for harm minimalization without a doubt save lives and improve the harmful situations created from a prohibition only stance.

The risks taken by the large demographic of drug users in Australia are compounded by the laws we have in place today. Drugs remaining illicit means no regulation of the quality or safety of these substances by leaving the manufacturing and sale in the hands of non-regulated law breakers whose priorities are not the safety of their consumers. Lack of safe needle injection rooms and smoking rooms for drug addicts across Australia also creates a much more harmful situation for those users who are addicted.

States in the USA have shown the community benefits of cannabis legalisation. Not only are they generating a new state income off a new industry but the numbers for cannabis use in minors and the cases of driving

under the influence of cannabis have both dropped. These benefits far out weigh the cost of policing and the criminal charges for cannabis we have in Australia.

We have a chance to improve the lives of millions of drug using Australians. Whether they are normal functioning adults choosing to use drugs to improve their lives or people struggling with drug addiciton. The de-criminalisation of illicit drugs in australia and a country wide shift to harm minimalization techniques copied by those used by other countries around the world would without a doubt improve the situation created from the current war on drugs.

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File1:

File2:

File3: