

## **Should Texas legalize marijuana? Yes, the state will benefit from it**

**Antwanise Jackson, Opinion Editor | Posted: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:00 am**

Marijuana is a word that often comes with a negative connotation. However, it seems to be a current hot topic. The recent legalization of marijuana in Colorado and Washington has caused quite a stir. Many people are wondering if their state will be next to legalize the drug. Texas has strongly been against the legalization of marijuana for years.

There are a lot of people who would agree with Texas' stance. I personally do not partake in the use of marijuana, but I don't see the problem.

Texas is one of the most conservative states out there. But this is 2014, times are changing and we need to change with the times. Texas should legalize marijuana and here's why.

First, it's medically beneficial. Cannabis, also known as marijuana, has been known to help those suffering from seizures as well as treat glaucoma patients.

According to Discovery Health, it can also be used to treat muscle pain, spasms and nausea.

The National Cancer Institute performed a clinical trial, which concluded that HIV and AIDS patients who took dronabinol, a drug formed from marijuana, had increased their appetite and stopped losing weight.

You see, it's helpful. Why would we ban something that could be a good thing for us?

Not only is it medically beneficial, but it would be a great move for us as a state financially.

The [lantern.com](http://lantern.com) reports that the first day of the year, pot sales in Colorado were more than 1 million dollars and the tax rate was about 29 percent.

According to The Huffington Post, a state like Texas could double that amount.

A study from Cato Institute also revealed that legalizing marijuana would generate at least 8.7 million dollars in federal and state tax revenue annually. Texas is a great state, but let's face it, that money could be used elsewhere.

There's also this so-called 'war on drugs' that's going on. We're spending countless amounts of money on arrests, processing and prosecutions of drug-related arrests.

Also, many government agencies are putting millions of dollars into the war on drugs when food stamps and other government aid programs are constantly being cut. Prohibition is only stifling our financial growth.

In 2012, more than 1.5 million drug-related arrests were made and 70 percent of those were marijuana-related. I might not be an expert on this, but clearly we're not winning this war. How about putting our efforts into something more useful, like education reform?

To sum everything up, lawmakers need to open their eyes and look at the bigger picture. Legalize marijuana, make the state some money and quit complaining. It's getting us nowhere.