



Weighing the Consequences of Legalization

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It is difficult to keep track of the fallacies and straw men in your reefer madness rant. Start with the obvious: The federal ban on cannabis makes it impossible for legal, federally regulated e-cigarette makers to develop and market safe THC cartridges for vaping. Consequently, most THC cartridges are dangerous bootleg products sold on the black market. Federal legalization would lead to improved product safety for which manufacturers would be held accountable.

The reason unlicensed dispensaries are flourishing in California relates to the state's exorbitant taxes and burdensome regulations. This isn't the case in Colorado and Washington, where an oversupply of legal cannabis outlets has driven prices down so much that state-based growers turn to California's black market in search of profits.

Further, your editorial implies marijuana is a "gateway" drug, even though the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns against that conclusion. It may be true that "95% of heroin and cocaine users report first using pot," but if marijuana wasn't so largely obtained via the black market, consumers would be less likely to interact with dealers who introduce them to other substances.

The rash of vaping deaths and illnesses serves to illustrate the consequences of prohibition. Federal marijuana legalization is required urgently to prevent the rash from spreading.

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