



FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION Resolution 2013-4

Florida Sheriffs Association Resolution Opposing the Legalization of the Use, Possession, Cultivation, Delivery and Sale of Marijuana.

WHEREAS, marijuana is a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act, is defined as having a high potential for abuse and has no accepted medical use in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association, National Cancer Institute, American Cancer Society and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society have rejected smoked marijuana as medicine; and

WHEREAS, marijuana should be subject to the same research, evaluation, analysis and study as any other potential medicine, under the standards of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA); and

WHEREAS, recent analysis from the *National Institute on Drug Abuse* reveals the potency of marijuana has reached the highest level since scientific analysis of the drug began, with THC amounts rising from 4% in 1980s to 15% in 2012; and

WHEREAS, the higher potency of today's marijuana may be contributing to the substantial increase in the number of teenagers and adults in treatment for marijuana dependence; and

WHEREAS, marijuana is a gateway drug and according to the *RAND Drug Policy Research Center*, there is a high incidence of progression from the use of marijuana to the use of heroin and cocaine, with supporting studies indicating the younger an individual is when first using marijuana, the more they are to end up using cocaine and heroin; and

WHEREAS, the Sheriffs believe the effort to legalize marijuana is contrary to the interests of the public health, safety and welfare, and desires to preserve the rights of citizens to live and work in a community where drug abuse is not accepted and citizens are not subjected to the adverse effects of drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, the dangers of illegal drugs, such as marijuana, and the threat to public safety caused by their use in terms of highway safety, criminal activity and domestic violence are well documented; and

WHEREAS, legalization of marijuana will most assuredly increase drug use and health care costs inasmuch as it is an addictive drug that poses significant health

consequences to its users, while recent studies have linked marijuana use to birth defects, respiratory system damage, cancer, mental illness, violence, infertility, and immune system damage; and

WHEREAS, legalizing marijuana would potentially increase black market sales of the drug by cartels that do not want to operate within a regulatory system because of other illegal activities in which they are involved; and

WHEREAS, black market sales would be concentrated on our nation's youth to which marijuana would still be illegal under proposed state initiatives; and

WHEREAS, other states who have legalized medical marijuana have seen an increase of youth possessing marijuana after the regulation of medical marijuana dispensaries; and

WHEREAS, business owners lose an estimated \$100 billion per year because of substance abuse, including marijuana, and employees who use drugs are only two thirds as productive as non-users and their use contributes to increased thefts, damaged equipment, increased healthcare costs, higher incidents of accidents, and other unnecessary costs in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, there are children placed in foster care because of parental marijuana and other substance abuse, sexual assault is frequently facilitated by substance use and domestic violence offenders have substance abuse problems; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine reports that the future of medical marijuana "lies in its individual components" that can be isolated and delivered in a non-smoked fashion; and

WHEREAS, Marinol and Cesamet, pills based on THC, marijuana's active intoxicating ingredient, are available at US pharmacies today; and

WHEREAS, Sativex, an oral spray extract of marijuana containing mainly equal parts THC and CBD (CBD does not produce intoxication and tends to reduce the intoxicating effects of THC), has already been approved in almost two dozen countries and is in the late stages of FDA approval in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, these legally dispensed medications are far safer and carry less risk of abuse than smoked marijuana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Florida Sheriffs Association that:

(1) THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION IS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE LEGALIZATION OF THE USE, POSSESSION, CULTIVATION, DELIVERY AND SALE OF MARIJUANA.

(2) THIS RESOLUTION SHALL BE EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION ON THE 11th DAY OF DECEMBER 2013.