

Persuasive custom on legalization of marijuana in california



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Legalization of Marijuana in California Swimmer Michael Phelps is the first person to take home eight gold medals in a single Olympics. Even more amazingly, he did so at the young age of 23 ("Phelps"). However, he is nowhere near his predicted income potential for commercial endorsements (Sentementes). Why? Because just three months after his record-breaking swims, a photograph of Phelps allegedly smoking marijuana was released, and as a result, Phelps lost a large endorsement contract with Kellogg ("Phelps"; Sentementes). Additionally, under current United States law, Phelps could be prosecuted as a criminal, just like the 100 million other Americans who admit to smoking marijuana in their lifetimes (NORML). Today's marijuana users are not Otto the bus driver, smoking a joint while driving past imaginary purple elephants. They are not deadbeats hanging onto the fringe of society. They are average men and women, many of them diligent students, community business owners, and even civic leaders (NORML). Are these people criminals? No! They are simply good people caught on the bad side of a poorly-written, poorly-planned, and poorly-executed public policy. California is known as the cutting edge of social change. The state is already at the forefront of the drug legalization debate, having legalized marijuana for medical use in 1996 (Secretary of State). This means the state already has experience in the regulation and distribution of marijuana legally, and makes it the perfect testing ground for the legalization of recreational marijuana. Medical marijuana has been found to be more effective on a wider variety of symptoms and to be safer, with fewer side effects, than Marinol, an artificial cannaboid medication (Joy, Watson, & Benson, p 203). There has been no evidence that the legalization of medical marijuana in the state has increased recreational usage, and the passage of this law saved <https://assignbuster.com/persuasive-custom-on-legalization-of-marijuana-in-california/>

thousands of legitimate disease sufferers from being banded as criminals. Legalizing recreational usage of marijuana could save the state of California money. If its use were de-criminalized, the courts and correctional institutions of California would be able to focus their efforts on fighting violent crimes, instead of prosecuting adults for an activity in their own homes that is hurting no one. Instead, the state could profit from this activity, by opening licensed distribution establishments and levying taxes on the purchase of the substance (Secretary of State). This money could then be turned around into public health programs, educational reform, or other needy government programs, in the same way that legalizing gambling in the form of a state-run lottery works. In addition to reducing perceived criminal activity, legalizing marijuana could reduce the effect of marijuana as a “ gateway” into harder drugs and crime. While this seems counter-intuitive, the explanation is actually rather obvious. Since marijuana is currently illegal, the only way to obtain it is by association with a criminal organization (NORML). These organizations are responsible for much of the gang-related violence in California and Mexico (“ Legalize-marijuana measure”). If marijuana were legalized, users would no longer have to interact with drug dealers who may also try to push harder drugs, such as cocaine, or try to extort criminal activities as payment or in blackmail. Without this exposure, legal marijuana users would have no reason to move from marijuana to other more dangerous drugs (NORML). Marijuana is a drug, but it is no more dangerous or addictive to the average user than alcohol (Joy, Watson, & Benson, p 98). The current legal status of marijuana for medical use, which has not had any major negative effects, begs the question: “ why is recreational marijuana illegal?” As we have seen, there is <https://assignbuster.com/persuasive-custom-on-legalization-of-marijuana-in-california/>

no good answer to this question. The legalization of marijuana in California will stop the criminalization of good citizens, bring in revenue for the state, and possibly even stop other types of criminal activity. Why hasn't this happened already? Works Cited JOY, JANET, WATSON, STANLEY, and BENSON, JOHN. Marijuana and Medicine : Assessing the Science Base. Washington, D. C. National Academy Press, 1999. " Legalize-marijuana Measure Loses in California." WHEC Nov. 03 2010. Web. 10 Mar. 2011. NORML. Working to Reform Marijuana Laws. NORML, 2010. Web. 10 Mar. 2011. " Phelps: Photo with Marijuana Pipe Real." Associated Press Feb. 2 2009. Web. 10 Mar. 2011. Secretary of State. Prop 19. State of California, 2010. Web. 10 Mar. 2011. SENTEMENTES, GUS. " Phelps to Promote New High-end 'Swim Spas'" Baltimore Sun November 03 2010, sec. Business. Web. 10 Mar. 2011.