

Initiative



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Initiative for Regulate, Control and Tax Cannabis Act of The California

Initiative that this paper would focus on is the initiative to legalize marijuana which is popularly known as the Regulate, Control and Tax Cannabis Act of 2010. According to a news report last May, the said initiative upon becoming a law would then allow individuals in California :

“...who are at least 21 years old to possess up to one ounce of marijuana for personal use . Adults would also be able to grow up to 25 square feet of pot per residence or parcel” (AOL News, 2010)”.

The said initiative had qualified for last November ballots since it has gathered the required number of signatures which met the deadline. If ever this would be implemented, then this is would be the first law of the United States which allows marijuana legally for personal consumption. Although marijuana was allowed in the state strictly for medical use more than a decade ago, still allowing it for personal consumption is another matter.

Those who advocate the passing of the initiative into a law argue that the tax would greatly benefit the state which is currently suffering from the economic crisis. According to Weber (2010) “ supporters say state-run studies have found that taxes on marijuana could raise as much as \$1. 4 billion in annual revenue”. This would really help the ailing economy as Governor Schwarzenegger announces for a second round of tax breaks for new home buyers in order to boost the housing industry. Somehow, the additional income would be a welcome relief for the government.

A survey was conducted in April last year which revealed that more than half of the voters support the said initiative. Similarly, Weber reported the enthusiasm of the people behind the initiative:

" It was very easy," the initiatives main proponent, Richard Lee, told the

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paper. " People were eager to sign. We heard they were ripping the petitions out of peoples hands to do it."(qtd. from Marijuana Legalization Could End Up in Ballot, 2005).

However, not all sectors of society are happy about these developments since law enforcers as well prosecutors believe that legalization would produce more problems for society. This would involve drug-related crimes and it would be too late then to arrest the problem when the use of marijuana becomes legal. Definitely, use of marijuana promotes negative externalities which can also become a precedent for legalizing other vices in society. It is still the government's accountability and responsibility to balance the advantages and disadvantages of a public policy. The public policy reflects the core values of a society. Although the benefit of providing more income for the government is utilitarian and practical, still, traditional sectors uphold moral ethics. Besides, the enforcement of law to those who commit crimes would become complicated when use of marijuana becomes legal. The demand for marijuana may even increase as young people have the access to its use and even propagation. There is always a room for possible abuse of such substance. In conclusion, the initiative hasn't passed or failed yet but there is a great possibility that it can become a law that could become a precedent for other states.

Works Cited:

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