The Legalization of Marijuana in the CNMI

Speech 210

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Introduction

Every issue has its pros and cons like the debate of whether or not the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands should legalize the use of marijuana. No doubt that marijuana is a drug that undergoes a change in the way you feel and how you visualize things. However, harm’s way can be avoided if drug is handled responsibly. This paper will cover on why marijuana should be legalized on account to good results such as giving an advantage to workers in the Department of Public Safety, an opportunity of increase in our revenues, and for medicinal use.

Marijuana

What is marijuana? According to an article from Medical News Today, marijuana is obtained from “the dried flowering tops, leaves, stems, and seeds of the Cannabis sativa (hemp) plant.” (medicalnewstoday.com) Weed, herbs, ganja, or Mary Jane are some of the names that people like to call it. It is studied that marijuana contains an active ingredient called Tetrahydrocannabinol, “THC acts on specific brain cell receptors called cannabinoids,” which causes a person to get high (medicalnewstoday.com). This drug can be smoked by the mouth, inhaled through the nose, brewed as a tea, or eaten in products such as what we call “space brownies”.

Legalization of Marijuana

According to police officer Leopoldo Duenas, the legalization of marijuana will benefit the people who work within the Department of Public Safety because there will be “better focus on other crimes for Criminal Justice and also wipes out in house/non licensed drug dealing” which will help law enforcement officers’ concentrate more on other crimes instead of a victimless crime such as marijuana (L. Duenas, personal communication, October 10, 2016). Officer Duenas also asserts that “a marijuana joint is a payable crime that is up to $50.00 and up to 24 hours of jail time because of due process” in the Northern Mariana Islands (L. Duenas, personal communication, October 10, 2016). A risk factor for legalizing marijuana is that drivers operating a vehicle under the influence of marijuana are a danger to other motorist and pedestrians on the highway and out of the highway. While operating a vehicle under the influence of alcoholic beverages has been a major problem, driving high can also be a major problem as well because once marijuana is numerously taken; it can alter the mind, which can be a danger to the community and for oneself. Although when using marijuana in regards to future law establishments, it should be taken in a controlled area such as a person’s residence or a specified area for taking in marijuana, where as one can maintain their drug consumption. This act will reduce the risk of violence amongst our community.

Senator Sixto Igisomar is writing a bill, Senate Bill 19-106, upon legalizing marijuana for personal, medicinal, and commercial use. Marijuana is legal in about 28 regions of the United States, whereas there has been a rise in revenues and economic growth from taxed marijuana (medicalmarijuana.procon.org). Having underground non-licensed drug dealers sell drugs from their dwellings could cause violence such as when a drug deal goes wrong, it could lead to serious injuries or even death and potentially harm family members and bystanders. With legalizing marijuana, marijuana dispensaries would be open to the public, which would bring in revenue to the community from taxed marijuana. To have marijuana dispensaries open up, it will have drug dealers who distributes from their home or vehicle discontinue their business because the marijuana dispensary would have a more variety of marijuana to choose from. “Marijuana has been shown to be effective in reducing nausea induced by cancer chemotherapy” implies that marijuana can be used for medical use (Zimmer, Morgan, p.16. 1997). Senator Igisomar shared that his brother was struggling with agonizing pain and the only way to ease the pain was marijuana, but it is illegal here in the CNMI, therefore, they had to bring his brother elsewhere to seek medical attention where marijuana is legal. If marijuana was legal in the CNMI, our community will have a closer reach for medical needs in regards to marijuana and wouldn’t have to spend as much to travel elsewhere.

In consummation, there will be cons like operating a vehicle while under the influence of marijuana can be a danger to the community, however, these negatives will be outweighed by restrictions and laws that can be made, whereas people who fail to comply with the laws of marijuana will have to face the consequence of getting their dispensary card terminated to a certain extent and will pay a hefty if not a petty fine depending on the severity of crime. Legalizing marijuana will bring benefits to our community not only through economic growth wise, but through personal and medical purposes. So say yes to bringing benefits to our community and economy. Say yes to personal and medicinal use that will help us. Say yes to legalizing marijuana. Say yes to Senate Bill 19-106.

Interviews

Officer Leopoldo Duenas of the Department of Public Safety: (L. Duenas, personal communication, October 10, 2016)

What are your thoughts on legalizing marijuana?

“Better focus on other crimes for Criminal Justice and also wipes out in house/none licensed drug dealing”

“A marijuana joint is a payable crime that is up to $50.00 and up to 24 hours of jail time because of due process”

Public Speaking

Senator Sixto Igisomar’s Speech; my notes:

His topic regards to the legalization of marijuana. He already shelved his first version of the marijuana bill and drafted another version; he thought it is the right time to regulate weeds as personal, commercial and medicinal use. He explained several reasons why legalization of marijuana is the trend in CNMI. As the senator brought the story of his brother couldn't get medical treatment at Saipan, the senator had to bring his brother to the Philippines to get treatment. His brother had pain all over the body but could not find a way to release the pain. The brother mentioned if he could get recreational marijuana to release pain. The senator had to say no because it was still illegal to have marijuana in the CNMI. He stated a Senate Bill 19-106, this bill will allow for the personal use, commercial use and the medicinal use of marijuana. And he was sure about the benefits that marijuana would bring.

References

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