

OPINIONS CONCERNING DRUG LAW

REFORM IN HAWAII

Prepared for:



January 2013

Methodology

- A total of 603 interviews were conducted by telephone with State of Hawaii voters beginning on November 19, 2012 and ending on December 4, 2012.
 - The random sample consisted of 603 total interviews (300-Oahu/ 101-B.I./ 100-Maui County/ 102-Kauai).
- The resulting data was then weighted to reflect voter population by island so that the totals shown are proportional to population in the reporting.
- The sample used in the study was generated using QMark's proprietary Random Digit Dialing software.
 - Calls were made to both landline and mobile telephones
- The margin of error for a sample of this size (n=603) is +/- 4.07 percentage points with a 95% confidence level.

Medical Marijuana

- Each respondent was read the following statement:
 - *As you may be aware, the Hawaii State Legislature passed a law in the year 2000 allowing patients with terminal or debilitating conditions to possess and consume marijuana if their doctors recommend it.*
- Registered voters were then asked how strongly they favored or opposed this legislation.

| | OVERALL |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Strongly favor (4) | 51% |
| Somewhat favor (3) | 30% |
| NET FAVOR | 81% |
| Somewhat oppose (2) | 6% |
| Strongly oppose (1) | 9% |
| NET OPPOSE | 15% |
| Don't know | 5% |
| | |
| MEAN | 3.28 |

Regulated Dispensary

- Respondents were presented with the following information:
 - *Even though the use of marijuana for medical purposes is legal in Hawaii, there is no legal way for patients to obtain it except by growing it themselves. Do you favor or oppose some type of tightly regulated dispensary system to provide safe and legal access to marijuana for those registered with the program.*
- The registered voters polled were then asked to rate how strongly they favored or opposed the proposal that was just presented to them.

| | OVERALL |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Strongly favor (4) | 55% |
| Somewhat favor (3) | 23% |
| NET FAVOR | 78% |
| Somewhat oppose (2) | 6% |
| Strongly oppose (1) | 12% |
| NET OPPOSE | 18% |
| Don't know | 4% |
| | |
| MEAN | 3.27 |

Decriminalization

- Respondents were asked for their thoughts on the topic of decriminalization, in other words, making possession and personal use of marijuana by adults a violation, similar to a parking ticket.

| | 2005 | 2012 | Change +/- 5.0 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| Yes, make marijuana use a violation | 42% | 58% | ▲ |
| No, leave marijuana use a crime | 55% | 36% | ▼ |
| Don't know | 3% | 6% | — |

Use of Funds From Fines

- We asked respondents if marijuana use by adults was reduced to a violation would they be in favor of the idea of using the fines collected for drug prevention programs.

| | 2005 | 2012 | Change +/- 5.0 |
|---|------|------|----------------|
| Yes, use fines for drug prevention programs | 79% | 86% | ▲ |
| Oppose idea | 17% | 10% | ▼ |
| Don't know | 4% | 4% | — |

Regulate and Tax – Asked Two Ways

- Respondents were asked if they support the idea of legalizing, regulating and taxing the sale and personal use of marijuana by adults.

| | 2005 | 2012 | Change +/- 5.0 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| Yes, legalize, regulate and tax | 37% | 57% | ▲ |
| No, leave it as a crime | 60% | 40% | ▼ |
| Don't know | 4% | 3% | — |

- Respondents were asked they supported or opposed the idea that marijuana should be “taxed, regulated, and legalized for adults.”

| | OVERALL |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Yes- Strong (4) | 45% |
| Yes- Somewhat strong (3) | 12% |
| NET SUPPORT | 57% |
| No-Somewhat strong (2) | 7% |
| No-Strong (1) | 32% |
| NET OPPOSE | 39% |
| Don't know | 3% |
| | |
| MEAN | 2.73 |

Legalization Tax Revenue

- Voter respondents were asked to suppose for a minute that marijuana was deemed legal for personal use by adults...
- They were then asked if it were up them where they would like to see tax revenue derived from the sales focused.

| | 2012 |
|------------------------|------|
| Public education | 41% |
| Drug treatment program | 36% |
| Aid to homelessness | 8% |
| Kupuna programs | 8% |
| Don't know | 7% |

Five Strongest Arguments to Change Current Law

- Compared to possession of marijuana - ice and violent crimes are much bigger problems. Our police should spend more time / resources going after violent crime or hard drugs (76%)
- People convicted of even minor drug offenses are barred from getting federal college loans. People who have committed violent crimes, however, are eligible for these loans (68%)
- Young people now have easy access to marijuana since, of course, drug dealers don't check ID. Placing marijuana under strict regulatory control, with penalties for sales to minors, may actually decrease youth access here in Hawaii (68%)
- Legalizing marijuana for adults will undercut dangerous drug cartels which sell millions of dollars in marijuana on the black market (67%)
- Every day people are sent back to jail because of probation violations for minor marijuana possession or dirty urine tests, clogging our court system and ruining people's lives (65%)

War on Drugs

The sixth strongest argument to change laws was the following:

- The drug war has been costly, unjust and ineffective (64%)

In a separate question voters were asked about the war on drugs and the expenditures to wage it.

- The research shows 65% of the registered voters polled believe the results of the war on drugs based on an expenditure of \$105 million* is not worth it.

| | 2012 |
|--|------|
| War on Drugs NOT worth the financial expenditures | 65% |
| War on Drugs is worth the financial expenditure | 28% |
| Don't know | 7% |

Political Impact

Registered voters were asked what impact it would have on their vote if their state legislator voted to decriminalize the possession of marijuana by adults.

- 75% of the registered voters said if their state legislator voted to decriminalize marijuana it would either have no impact on their vote or it would actually make them more likely to vote for that legislator

| | 2012 |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Much more likely to vote for | 26% |
| Somewhat more likely | 7% |
| NET SUPPORT | 33% |
| Somewhat less likely | 6% |
| Much less likely | 16% |
| NET OPPOSE | 22% |
| Would have no effect on my vote | 42% |
| Don't know | 3% |

Profile of Respondents

| | OVERALL | COMMENTS |
|---------------------------|---------|--|
| SAMPLE | | |
| Oahu | 71% | |
| B.I. | 13% | |
| Maui | 10% | |
| Kauai | 6% | |
| VOTING HISTORY | | |
| All/ Most | 50% | Majority have voted in all or most of the elections held since they've been eligible |
| Some/few | 32% | |
| POLITICAL PARTY | | |
| Democrat | 52% | Half the respondents classify themselves as being democrats while the remainder were made up of independents and republicans |
| Independent | 23% | |
| Republican | 20% | |
| IDEOLOGY | | |
| Liberal | 49% | The respondents were split fairly evenly among liberals and conservatives |
| Conservative | 42% | |
| COLLEGE GRAD | 59% | A little more than half had a college degree |
| LABOR UNION | 20% | One in five is a union member |
| LIVED OUTSIDE HI | 46% | Roughly half have lived outside of HI at some point |
| CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD | 31% | A third live with a child under 18 |
| ATTEND CHURCH | 34% | A third attend church on a regular basis |
| BORN-AGAIN | 28% | One in four consider themselves to be born-again |
| AGE | | |
| 18-24 | 8% | The average age is 49.36 |
| 25-34 | 16% | |
| 35-49 | 22% | |
| 50-64 | 32% | |
| 65+ | 19% | |
| MEAN | 49.36 | |
| ETHNICITY | | |
| Caucasian | 28% | |
| Japanese | 28% | |
| Hawaiian | 18% | |
| Filipino | 13% | |
| Other | 9% | |
| GENDER | | |
| Male | 56% | |
| Female | 44% | |

Questions?

Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Decriminalization & Legalization for Hawaii

An Economic Report by:

David C. Nixon

Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii
College of Social Sciences Public Policy Center

Economic Report Key Findings

- **Surge in arrests, surge in costs, no reduction in use.**
- Recent years have seen a surge in marijuana arrests. Since 2004, possession arrests have increased almost 50% and distribution arrests almost doubled while marijuana use rates remain static or even increase.

David C. Nixon, *Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Decriminalization & Legalization for Hawai'i* (2013) (forthcoming at: http://acluhi.org/stats_marijuana_hawaii/)

Economic Report Key Findings

- **Marijuana laws affect some groups more than their shares of the population would predict.**
- **Marijuana arrests are:**
 - 50% more likely for males
 - 70% more likely for juveniles
 - Twice as likely for those under 25
 - 70% more likely for Native Hawaiians

David C. Nixon, *Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Decriminalization & Legalization for Hawai'i* (2013) (forthcoming at: http://acluhi.org/stats_marijuana_hawaii/)

Economic Report Key Findings

- **Relaxing marijuana laws frees up resources**
- **Decriminalization** could recapture \$9 million annually to state and county governments
 - An increase from the \$5 million estimated in 2005.

David C. Nixon, *Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Decriminalization & Legalization for Hawai'i* (2013) (forthcoming at: http://acluhi.org/stats_marijuana_hawaii/)

Economic Report Key Findings

- **Regulate marijuana like alcohol, boost State coffers.**
- **Legalization** (regulation, control, & taxation) could save state & county governments an additional \$3M in enforcement costs annually.
- **Legalization** (regulation, control, & taxation) could realize an additional \$11.3M in new tax revenue yearly.

David C. Nixon, *Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Decriminalization & Legalization for Hawai'i* (2013) (forthcoming at: http://acluhi.org/stats_marijuana_hawaii/)

Map of State Marijuana Laws

1/3/13: Map adapted from Marijuana Policy Project: <http://www.mpp.org/assets/pdfs/library/Map-of-State-Marijuana-Laws.pdf>

