



BRIEF to Australian Parliamentarians

**Our Vision: To support and educate young people, their families
and communities to prevent the damage caused by drugs**

WHERE IS THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON CANNABIS?

Last Saturday the Herald Sun printed (page 65) a plea by the Pennington Institute for recreational cannabis use to be legalised in Australia, where it [apparently](#) prefers a Canadian model in which cannabis is regulated in a manner similar to alcohol and tobacco.

The Pennington Institute arguments were:

1. Everyone's doing it
2. Australians are positively responding to the (blatantly one-sided) pro-cannabis media campaign
3. Regulation won't 'create' a cannabis market
4. It's safer than alcohol and tobacco
5. Current laws are unfair to cannabis users

Drug Free Australia urges Parliamentarians to use their unique position to create a discussion which the Australian media is denying the public - if the Institute's arguments are patently and dangerously false, doesn't the public have a right to know?

[40.6%](#) of Australians have used cannabis in the past, but in 2022 [11.5%](#) were still recreationally using it, demonstrating that nine out of every ten Australians are

not using it, and three out of every four Australians who've tried it decided against it. Most everyone is NOT doing it.

Why is it that so many Australians make a personal choice against illicit drugs? It's because they responsibly know that illicit drug use harms just [so many](#) people – the user, their partner, their children, siblings, friends, workmates, other road users. They recognise the principle that my freedoms end where yours start. Illicit drug harms are so unacceptable that governments have to liberally fund official 'harm reduction' interventions. Our current laws protect so many from the unacceptable harms caused by cannabis use. This is Social Science 101.

Colorado was the first of two US States to legalise recreational use in 2013, and within two years cannabis use doubled, doubling the unacceptable harms to the innocent people listed above. Between 2010 (after Colorado drastically loosened controls on medical cannabis) and 2016, cannabis hospitalisations increased [360%](#), cannabis related suicides by [410%](#) and cannabis-related traffic deaths by [230%](#), all with a [380%](#) increase in black market 'grow' arrests, which sought to operate under the cover of legalisation with their significantly cheaper cannabis prices.

Recently published [medical journal studies](#) (50+ thus far) on vast populations in all 50 States of the US and 27 countries in Europe now show that cannabis (33 cancers) causes twice as many cancers as tobacco (16 cancers) with the freely available Cannabidiol (CBD) the most cancer-causing cannabinoid ([12 cancers](#)). Cannabis is horrifyingly causal in [89 of 95 birth defects](#) such as hole in the heart tracked by the European Medicines Agency, with the cancer and birth defect-causing mutational effects of cannabis epigenetically carried to three and four generations of each user's children and grandchildren. Cannabis is definitively not safer than alcohol or tobacco.

Most troubling is that the mainstream media have gone dark on all the above since March 2022. Drug Free Australia has frequently sent media releases with this information as rebuttal to Legalise Cannabis party releases, where once these same media would line up for our response.

We urge all Parliamentarians to consider whether the public has a right to know – and to respond accordingly – where the discussion starts with you.

Gary Christian, Research Director for Drug Free Australia – [0422 163 141](tel:0422163141)

Click on Unsubscribe if you do not want to
continue getting DFA Parliamentary Briefs

[Unsubscribe](#)