

Troy Hester

Formal Outline for Persuasive Speech

CO2015: Public Speaking

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PREPARATION LIST

Topic: Recreational marijuana should be legalized for public use

General Purpose: To persuade

Specific Purpose: To persuade my audience that recreational marijuana should be legalized for public use

Thesis: Recreational marijuana should be legalized for public use [statement of policy]

Outline Organization of Main Points: Refutation

INTRODUCTION

[**Attention Getter**] Charlie Figi was only three months old when she had her first seizure. They were extremely severe, often lasting two to four hours and always landed her in the Pediatric ICU or hospital. The doctors tried everything, but they couldn't get them to stop. By two years old she was on seven different drugs, some of them being very addictive and having brutal side effects and they weren't even working. By age four she was having around 300 grand mal seizures (which are the big ones) a week. Charlie's parents finally decided to try medical marijuana, which had recently been legalized in their state (Colorado). It worked instantly. She didn't have a single seizure for the entire week after receiving the almost entirely harmless cannabis oil. After

consistent use of the medical marijuana she has been reduced to having only 2-3 seizures a month and no longer needs to be on multiple harmful medications. **[Story: Young]** The benefits of medical marijuana are quite obvious so I'm going to assume that we all agree that it should be legalized.

[Audience Connection] The real issue is recreational marijuana. We've all smoked weed before, right? **[Rhetorical Question]** Well maybe not, but statistically speaking 35% of you *have* in fact experimented with weed before – that's at least seven of you who are sitting here today.

[Meaningful Pause][Fact:Bestrashniy] Many people are hesitant to even consider supporting the legalization of recreational marijuana, but if you really look deep into the issue you will see there is quite a rational argument as to why **[topic orientation]** recreational marijuana should be legalized for public use.

[Thesis] My thesis is that recently recreational marijuana should be legalized for public use because of its economic and safety benefits. **[Policy]**

[Preview Step] In this speech I will talk about the major economic advantages and safety benefits associated with legalizing marijuana as well as debunk the arguments against the legalization of marijuana.

BODY

I. Many people believe marijuana should *not* be legalized because it is detrimental to one's health, addictive, and could pose a risk to public safety.

A. There is no proof that marijuana is harmful to your health.

1. While marijuana is associated with minor side effects, such as 'the munchies,' doctors have not been able to establish whether or not marijuana is

associated with causing chronic bronchitis symptoms, large airway inflammation and cancer, especially lung cancer. **[Baker][Rational Appeal: Authority]**

- a) As it turns out, marijuana is actually much less harmful to your lungs and overall health than tobacco is yet tobacco is legal and marijuana is not.
2. Like many substances, marijuana is dangerous when taken with many prescription drugs.

- a) However because it is illegal in many states, many people do not report marijuana during a medication history, which can sometimes prove to be much more dangerous to the patients health when they are given medication that reacts poorly with weed.
3. As it turns out, marijuana is actually much less harmful to your lungs and overall health than tobacco is yet tobacco is legal and marijuana is not.

[Motivational Appeal: Vital]

B. Yes, marijuana *can* be addictive, but so can anything.

1. Researchers have discovered that use of marijuana can become addictive over time; however, it is not nearly as bad as other drugs.
 - a) Some people can become psychologically dependent on marijuana, which can happen whenever anything is not used responsibly (such as an addiction to coffee) but it is much less likely to cause severe withdrawal problems than other hard drugs.
2. Marijuana is also much less addictive (and less harmful) than alcohol is, yet alcohol is legal and marijuana is not. **[Parallel Phrasing]**

C. Legalizing marijuana would actually do the opposite of create safety problems.

1. Being high is actually less dangerous for public safety than being drunk.

- a) Being high tends to mellow and calm you, whereas being drunk can cause all sorts of adverse and rash decisions.
- b) Colorado legalized marijuana and there has been a 3% drop in traffic fatalities in 2014. [**Rational Appeal: Causal Reasoning** –

Hypothesis][Counter-Argument]

[Transition: Now that I have disproved arguments opposing the legalization of marijuana, we will now explore a couple reasons as to why marijuana should be legalized for public use.]

II. There are several strong arguments as to why marijuana should be legalized for public use.

A. Legalizing marijuana would provide numerous economic advantages.

1. Experts suggest that the marijuana industry is well over a \$100 billion industry.

a) This includes everything from growing, processing, and sale of the weed to the sale of related products and the opening of spinoff industries.

(1) Employment in Colorado is up because of numerous spinoff industries that have popped up because of its legalization.

[Motivational Appeal: Novelty]

2. The most obvious economic advantage of legalizing weed lies in tax revenues.

a) In the magazine *The Week*, Harvard economist Jeffrey Miron states, “Average annual trade in marijuana is estimated at \$113 billion, which represents nearly \$45 billion in taxes slipping through our fingers.” [**Quote: Smith]**

- (1) Revenue from marijuana sale in Colorado was over \$40 million in 2014, which brought in about \$22 million in taxes.
3. Legalizing marijuana decreases the amount the money that needs to be spent on law enforcements attempt to control it.
 - a) One study suggests that legalizing marijuana would save the government almost \$9 billion a year. [**“Legalizing Marijuana”**]
 - b) In Colorado law enforcement has saved almost \$2 million because of marijuana legalization. [**Rough**]
 - c) Less people would be imprisoned, which saves the law enforcement, especially since each arrest costs about \$300.
- B. One other major benefit that comes from legalizing marijuana would be the improved public safety.
 1. Weed that is bought on the black market can often times be very dangerous.
 - a) It can sometimes be laced with harmful or extremely addictive drugs.
 - b) Legalizing weed would provide a way for it to be regulated and would also provide trustworthy providers for users to obtain safe product from.
 2. By legalizing weed, you give the law enforcement more time and money spend pursuing other hard drugs and crimes, including those involving violence.
 - a) About a fourth of people in prison solely because of non-violent drug offences, mainly those involving marijuana.
 - (1) This would clear crowded jails.
 3. It would also decrease the amount of money that supports organized crime.

a) Many people believe that by legalizing the drug it would cut off an important stream of money for many people in illegal drug trade.

(1) Making it less profitable for criminals will decrease the violence associated with the trade and take pressure off law enforcement.

(a) Crime in Colorado actually has decreased since the legalization of marijuana.

CONCLUSION

[Topic and thesis summary] In conclusion, we see that the only sensible option is to legalize recreational marijuana for public use both because of its immense economic advantages and its crucial public safety benefits. **[Audience reconnection and clincher statement]** Our country is obviously struggling economically and is also having experiencing public safety issues directly related to drug trade. We owe it to our country to help make it a better place by legalizing marijuana.

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