



## **FAITH COMMUNITIES - CALL TO ACTION AGAINST LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA IN CONNECTICUT**

The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference is uniting with the CT State Missionary Baptist Convention and the CT Chapter of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference to speak out against the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut. We exhort our Catholic parishes throughout Connecticut to join with these urban faith communities to make this initiative successful.

### **Schedule for Week of Call to Action:**

- **Weekend of May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>** information is made available to parishioners in the bulletin or bulletin inserts. Pastors would also announce the effort of these three faith communities to oppose this legislation.

- **May 6<sup>th</sup> thru May 8<sup>th</sup>** parishioners will call the main phone numbers of the Democratic and Republican House and Senate Offices expressing opposition S.B. 1085.

### **Talking Points:**

- 1) The Catholic Church and other faith communities, oppose the legalization of recreational marijuana due to the negative impacts it would have on the residents of our state, including those under 21 years of age.
- 2) Catholic social teaching states that "the use of drugs inflicts very grave damage on human health and life. Their use, except on strictly therapeutic grounds, is a grave offense." <sup>1</sup>
- 3) Despite statements to the contrary medical addiction physicians from Yale and UCONN testified that all major studies show that marijuana is an addictive drug and a major gateway to future drug abuse.
- 4) The fact that marijuana has a negative impact on individuals is once again shown in a study released last month and published in the well-respected British medical journal *The Lancet*. This study revealed that "*Daily cannabis use was associated with **increased odds of psychotic disorder** compared with never*

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<sup>1</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church (#2291)

*users..., increasing to **nearly five-times** increased odds for daily use of high-potency types of cannabis.”<sup>2</sup>*

- 5) **It is not the same as alcohol** - When you take alcohol, it has its effects, and then leaves the body. When you use marijuana, it gets into the tissues of the body and is stored in the fatty tissue of the body, which includes the brain.
- 6) **Affects newborn babies** - The THC in marijuana today is four to five times stronger than in the 1980s. It can be passed on to babies in high concentrations in breast milk and has been shown to cause harm in developing brains. Research suggests babies exposed to marijuana in utero may develop verbal, memory and behavioral problems during early childhood.
- 7) **Sending the wrong message to teens** - Although the proposed legislation, S.B.1085, makes the sale of marijuana illegal to those under 21 years of age, the adult community is sending a clear message that it is not really harmful. In 2014, soon after legalization, young people in Colorado ranked first in the nation in marijuana use. The use and abuse of marijuana by youth increased by 20%.<sup>3</sup>
- 8) **Traffic Accidents and Fatalities** - Traffic Deaths increased by 48% soon after legalization in Colorado. 21% of those individuals killed tested positive for marijuana.<sup>4</sup>
- 9) The American Medical Association does not endorse the legalization of recreational marijuana because it is a “dangerous drug” and “public health concern” for which further impact studies must be done.<sup>5</sup>
- 10) The sale and distribution of recreational marijuana is becoming a multi-million dollar industry in our nation. The need for increased tax dollars is a main driver of the legalization of marijuana.

Visit [www.ctcatholicpac.org](http://www.ctcatholicpac.org) for more information.

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<sup>2</sup> “The Contribution of Cannabis Use to Variation in the Incidence to Variation in Psychotic Disorder Across Europe”. The Lancet, March 19, 2019

<sup>3</sup> Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado, The Impact, Volume 4, September 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> AMA Resolution 907, 2016