



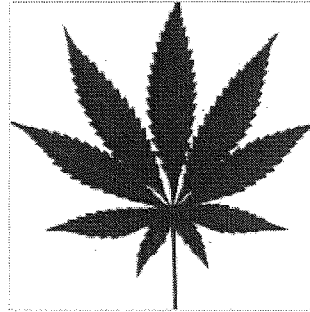
ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

June 29, 2015

Marijuana Action Alert

Call Gov. to Veto HB 218 to decriminalize marijuana



HB 218 was sent to the governor on June 19. A few days later, new research was released by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) showing ***low levels of marijuana cause impaired driving similar to those with .08 BAC for DUI of alcohol.***

Within 3 hours of consuming marijuana, drivers are nearly twice as likely to cause a crash, than those who are not under the influence of drugs. Drivers who use both alcohol and marijuana weaved within lanes even if their blood THC and alcohol concentrations were below the impairment thresholds for each substance alone, according to a June 23rd [news release from NIDA](#).

HB 218 would establish Illinois with the nation's highest pot-impaired driving threshold of 15 nanograms per milliliter of whole blood. The level in Colorado, Washington, and Montana are 5ng/ml, Nevada and Ohio are 2ng/ml, Pennsylvania is 1ng/ml.

HB 218 treats the possession of marijuana (cannabis) like a speeding ticket. The person receives a Uniform Cannabis Citation, pays a small fine and pleads guilty. More people will use and deliver marijuana if the penalties are reduced.

HB 218 reduces the penalty from a Class 4 felony to a misdemeanor for possession of 15 grams of cannabis, (37 "joints"), with a fine of \$55 to \$125. There is no age limit. Anyone middle school or high school age and up could possess marijuana. There is little deterrent for young people not to use the drug when the fine for possession is so small and the tickets are expunged from the record.

Is marijuana legalization in the future for Illinois? That was the question asked in a recent Chicago Tribune article, where reporter Robert Mc Coppin said, "With a medical pot program underway and lawmakers voting last month to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of the drug, Illinois is following a path that Alaska, Colorado, and Oregon have taken toward legalization."

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Contact the governor to Veto HB 218. Phone: 800-642-3112, 217-782-6830, 312-814-2121, or *e-mail* the Governor and ask him to Veto HB 218
<https://www.illinois.gov/gov/ContactUs/Pages/VoiceAnOpinion.aspx>

PRAY and share this Alert with your faith community.

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