



ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

April 19, 2013

Medical Marijuana Action Alert



FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

1. Please read and use the study and article below to write a Letter to the Editor about the problems of passing this law in Illinois.
2. Contact your Senator to ask for a NO vote on HB 1. [Click here to view a list of State Senators](#)
3. Contact Governor Quinn www2.illinois.gov/gov/pages/contactthegovernor.aspx or call 800-642-3112 to and ask him to OPPOSE HB 1 to safeguard the public and young people in Illinois.
4. Forward to 10 others.

Medical marijuana dispensaries: High tech tracking system unfulfilled

The technology was supposed to efficiently track medical marijuana from seed to sale - the catch-phrase that came to define Colorado's efforts to regulate what had been an outlaw business.

Field investigators could walk into any dispensary or grow operation and with a digital reader instantly collect data from tags attached to everything from newly potted plants to pot-infused lollipops.

In July 2011, the state Medical Marijuana Enforcement Division signed a \$636,000 contract with a Florida company to build the system using Radio Frequency Identification, or RFID, technology.

About nine months later, the project was shelved because of a budget shortfall - just one unfulfilled promise in a regulatory system often held up as a national model and serving as the foundation for how the state will regulate recreational pot legalized by Amendment 64 last fall.

The challenges of starting an agency from scratch, a lack of stable funding, staff cutbacks and balancing public safety concerns with the desires of an industry looking for legitimacy all have complicated efforts to regulate Colorado's Green Rush.

"The expectations were too high," said Marco Vasquez, who retired this month as the

division's enforcement chief. **"We had a champagne wish list on a beer budget, and we were never going to get there."** . . .

Technology allowing regulators to connect to the Internet and monitor businesses' surveillance cameras around-the-clock never materialized, independent testing of products allowed by state statute has yet to happen, and a team of auditors that was to sift data and identify potential problem businesses was disbanded. [Click here to read more](#)

III. UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES- p. 135-137

A. Age Distribution of Users

Contrary to what supporters anticipated, a majority of the patients are under the age of forty. Patient records seized by law enforcement officers from dispensaries during raids in San Diego County, California, in December of 2005 "showed that 72 percent of patients were between 17 and 40 years old . . ."61 In Montana, fifty percent of patients are forty or under, and twenty-five percent of patients are between the age of twenty-one and thirty.62 Colorado reports that sixty-one percent of patients are male with an average age of thirty-nine.63

Female patients account for thirty-one percent of all registered patients and have an average age of forty.64 In Nevada, fifty-three percent of patients are forty-four or younger.65 Anecdotal evidence from other jurisdictions, particularly California, suggests that this pattern of age distribution is generally the case.66 **Remarkably, the age distribution of medical marijuana users seems to mimic that of recreational users in its concentration of young persons.**67

B. Patient Illnesses and Conditions

As with age distribution, the conditions and diseases that patients identified varied from expectations. **Only a small percentage of users identified specific serious illnesses or conditions.** Health records from the state of Colorado, for example, reveal that only two percent of registered patients had cancer and one percent HIV/AIDS, while ninety-four percent claimed to suffer from "severe pain," a residual category that can be hard to diagnose and treat, and even harder to confirm.68 This distribution holds elsewhere. **Chronic pain is far and away the most common condition identified by medical marijuana applicants.**69 [Click here to read more](#)

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