

YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

_____ Bill Number _____

Legislative Action:

Introduced by: Stephan Morris
Authored by: Stephan Morris

House Committee: _____
House: _____
Senate Committee: _____
Senate: _____
Governor: _____

Delegation: Bozeman

Referred to Committee: _____

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "An act to decriminalize Marijuana, in order to reduce over
2 crowding in Montana Prisons."
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4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE MONTANA YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE:
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6 **Section 1.** Marijuana is the highly controversial drug used around the world. Some abuse
7 it, and some use it to ease the pain accompanied by debilitating diseases and disorders. The
8 question here is not to legalize marijuana for greater abuse. The point of this act is to reduce over
9 population in our state penitentiaries. This act will reduce the punishment administered for minor
10 marijuana offences. And reduce taxes for Montanans.

11 **Section 2.** The FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics claim: 12.7 % of state inmates are
12 incarcerated for marijuana related offences. 89% of those are incarcerated for minor possession,
13 not distribution, cultivation, or violent offences that accompany the latter. The point is,
14 marijuana is a drug that is proven equal in harm to common substances such as tobacco and
15 alcohol, and should not be classified as a Narcotic and carry major punishment.

16 **Section 3.** This act will work in concordance with Montana HB 541 to just decriminalize
17 marijuana. Montana Law states: 6 months imprisonment and \$500+ fine for quantities of 60
18 grams or less. And the same punishment includes possession of cannabis paraphernalia. HB 541
19 will still enforce possession of Marijuana, but the punishment would be much less severe. It will
20 also guarantee less crowding in our prisons, thus solving one of our major state problems.
21 Montana spends 20 million dollars annually to incarcerate people in possession of marijuana. We
22 could experience significant savings tat could be placed into beneficial programs.

23 **Section 4.** This bill will call for a \$50 fine if caught in possession of less than 60g.
24 Second and third offences will be \$150 and \$300. However, there will be no risk of
25 incarceration, resulting in the solution of reducing our over crowded prisons to there maximum
26 capacity.

27 **Section 5.** This bill will require no funding as we currently have all necessary
28 infrastructure to administer just punishment.

29 **Section 6.** This act will be implemented upon passage.
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