

# LEGISLATIVE RESOURCE SHEET | 2019 SESSION

Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association

## ISSUE/LEGISLATION: RECREATIONAL CANNABIS

Allowing individuals 21 years of age or older to cultivate, consume, use, and possess cannabis, cannabis products, and cannabis accessories; providing regulation of cannabis for commercial purposes; modifying the Clean Indoor Air Act; modifying controlled substance laws; authorizing rulemaking; taxing certain cannabis sales; providing for expungement of certain crimes; appropriating money

## PROPOSAL STATUS

MCPA is opposed to the legislation listed below which has been introduced in the Minnesota House and Senate.

House - [HF 420 introduced and referred to committee](#)

Senate – [SF 619 introduced and referred to committee](#)

- Governor Tim Walz has expressed an interest in holding hearings on the issue in 2019. Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka has said that marijuana legalization isn't a priority. Sen. Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson) also indicated that this will never pass the Senate this year when Law Enforcement doesn't have a roadside test that works.
- The current effective date of the proposed legislation is January 2022, which the authors said gives legislators ample time to deliberate and craft responsible regulatory policies. The authors state the purpose of the bill is not to rush something through this session but to start an important conversation around an issue Minnesota will have to address.

## BACKGROUND - Minnesota proposal

Legislation introduced: “Cannabis; cultivation, consumption, use, and possession of products and accessories allowed;”

**Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM, Inc.)** is a non-profit organization based in Alexandria, Virginia, opposed to [marijuana](#) legalization and commercialization. SAM describes itself as a bipartisan partnership that works with local, state, and federal legislators to create policies that decrease marijuana use.

**SAMmn is the Minnesota chapter that says it formed** “To educate the citizens of Minnesota on the research and science of marijuana usage with the scientific understanding of marijuana’s harms and potential as medicine. Our public health position is that current science does not support the commercialization and normalization of recreational marijuana use.”

**SAMmn website:** <https://sammn.org/>

## The Colorado Experience

In November 2012, Colorado voters passed Constitutional Amendment 64 which legalized marijuana for recreational purposes for anyone over the age of 21. The amendment also allowed for licensed marijuana retail stores, cultivation operations and edible manufacturers. Retail marijuana businesses became operational January 1, 2014.

Some national and state-level law enforcement organizations cite the Colorado experience as evidence of the detrimental impact recreational cannabis could have on Minnesota public safety, health and overall quality of life. The following information was collected by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. [Report Link:](#) and summarized below.

### Section I: Traffic Fatalities & Impaired Driving

- Since recreational marijuana was legalized, marijuana related traffic deaths **increased 151 percent** while all Colorado traffic deaths **increased 35 percent**
- Since recreational marijuana was legalized, traffic deaths involving drivers who tested positive for marijuana **more than doubled** from 55 in 2013 to 138 people killed in 2017. This equates to one person killed every 2 1/2 days compared to one person killed every 6 1/2 days.
- The percentage of all Colorado traffic deaths that were marijuana related **increased from 11.43 percent** in 2013 to **21.3 percent** in 2017.

### Section II: Marijuana Use

- Colorado past month marijuana use shows a **45 percent increase** in comparing the three-year average prior to recreational marijuana being legalized to the three years after legalization.
- Colorado past month marijuana use for ages 12 and older is ranked **3<sup>rd</sup>** in the nation and is **85 percent higher** than the national average.

### Section III: Public Health

- The yearly rate of emergency department visits related to marijuana increased 52 percent after the legalization of recreational marijuana. (2012 compared to 2016)•
- The yearly rate of marijuana-related hospitalizations increased 148 percent after the legalization of recreational marijuana. (2012 compared to 2016)•
- Marijuana only exposures more than tripled in the five-year average (2013-2017) since Colorado legalized recreational marijuana compared to the five-year average (2008-2012) prior to legalization.

### Section IV: Black Market

- RMHIDTA Colorado Task Forces (10) conducted 144 investigations of black market marijuana in Colorado resulting in: 239 felony arrests 7.3 tons of marijuana seized 43,949 marijuana plants seized 24 different states the marijuana was destined• The number of highway seizures of Colorado marijuana increased 39 percent from an average of 242 seizures (2009-2012) to an average of 336 seizures (2013-2017) during the time recreational marijuana has been legal.
- Seizures of Colorado marijuana in the U.S. mail system has increased 1,042 percent from an average of 52 parcels (2009-2012) to an average of 594 parcels (2013-2017) during the time recreational marijuana has been legal. Section

### V: Societal Impact

- Marijuana tax revenue represent approximately nine tenths of one percent of Colorado's FY 2017 budget
- Violent crime increased 18.6 percent and property crime increased 8.3 percent in Colorado since 2013.
- 65 percent of local jurisdictions in Colorado have banned medical and recreational marijuana businesses.
- As of June 2017, there were 491 retail marijuana stores in the state of Colorado compared to 392 Starbucks and 208 McDonald's.