



[Legalization of Marijuana, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly](#)

Marijuana has been a large topic of debate for the past decade. No one can seem to agree on whether or not this drug should be legalized for recreation, legalized for medicinal purposes or legalized at all. As more and more research comes out, marijuana is starting to look like one of the safest, most versatile drugs on the market. In all of recorded history, there has not been one death due to the actual smoking or consumption of marijuana. Now that doesn't mean people haven't done stupid things while they're high, but the short-term consumption of the drug hasn't directly lead to any deaths so far. There are currently ten states where the adult consumption of marijuana is legalized, and there are surely more to follow. The legalization of marijuana in these states have shown growth in their economies, due to the taxation and the limited law enforcement.

One of the best arguments for the legalization is the fact that marijuana might be the key to our nation's climbing debt. As the DPA has stated, "[State and local governments would acquire](#)

[significant new sources of tax revenue from regulating marijuana sales.](#)” (DPA, 2017). The marijuana industry is booming, growers and sellers alike are creating huge amounts of revenue in legalized states. In addition, the state itself is getting a bit of the pie, from taxation and regulation of these new businesses. Not only is marijuana creating more growth in our nation’s economy, it is also reducing the cost of many state law enforcement agencies and court costs, “Scarce law enforcement resources will be better used to ensure public safety while reducing corrections and court costs.” (DPA, 2017).

One of the major arguments against the legalization of marijuana is that legalization would prompt growth in the illicit market. Anti-legalization supporters believe that the legalization would allow more marijuana out on the streets, and conversely increase crime and illegal activity in our communities. But this is actually the opposite according to the DPA. Legalization would take the power out of drug dealers, making the marijuana more accessible would increase safety and regulation as well as putting a lot of drug dealers and illegal growers out of business, “[Legalizing and regulating marijuana will bring one of the nation’s largest cash crops under the rule of law. This will create jobs and economic opportunities in the formal economy instead of the illicit market.](#)” (DPA, 2017). More jobs would be created and inversely the amount of crime in our states and communities would actually decrease with the legalization of marijuana.

In conclusion, we will never know the effects of national legalization of marijuana until it happens. But statewide legalization will give us a pretty good idea of the social and economic consequences that the legal marijuana will lead to. So far, in the states that have gone through with legalization have experienced economic growth, decrease in crime rate and an overall increase in the consumer safety of marijuana (DPA, 2017). The legalization of marijuana looks promising, further research and testing must be done in order to conclude the factors that would influence the legalization and the consequences of legal marijuana. Marijuana might be the key to winning the war on drugs and recovering from our current financial crisis, or it could be the downfall of our country as we know it. There are still many other factors to be researched and areas to explore. Only time will tell about our mystery drug, but the future does look promising.