

WPD Memo

To: Town Manager, Jodi Ross
From: Chief Thomas McEnaney
Date: 10/4/2017
Re: Commercial Recreational Marijuana Dispensary

I am **not** in favor of having “Commercial” Recreational Marijuana Dispensary in Westford.

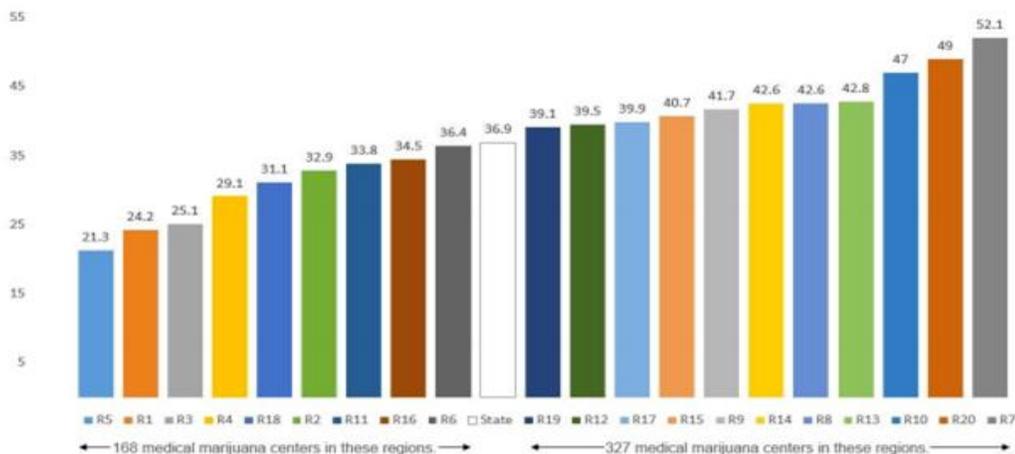
While serving on the medical marijuana advisory board, I had the opportunity to speak with several chiefs throughout the Commonwealth who had medical dispensaries and the most common issues they dealt with was public consumption and trespassing complaints. I am also concerned with people getting behind the wheel of a motor vehicle after consuming marijuana and putting our residents at risk. One such tragedy played out when an individual purchased and consumed marijuana and then struck and killed a Massachusetts State Trooper who was the father of six children. Some research shows that a large quantity of marijuana purchased is in the form of edibles. This is very concerning because often times the edibles are not identifiable from regular candies/ baked goods that could be easily mistaken by a child and consumed.

Marijuana is still considered to be a Scheduled 1 Drug under Federal Law and is illegal to possess. It is not clear how the Federal Government will issue grants to those municipalities that allow recreational dispensaries.

States that have legalized marijuana have the highest overall use rates of youth consuming marijuana, compared to states that do not. One study also focuses on use rates in communities that have more dispensaries as compared to communities that do not. See following chart:

Colorado High School Students' Lifetime Marijuana Use, 2013

With few exceptions, regions with lowest rates of use have fewest medical marijuana centers (total 168).
Regions with highest rates of use have most medical marijuana centers (total 327).



Sources: 2013 Colorado Healthy Kids Survey, Colorado Department of Revenue, MED Licensed Medical Marijuana Centers.

The more medical marijuana dispensaries, the more adolescent marijuana users.

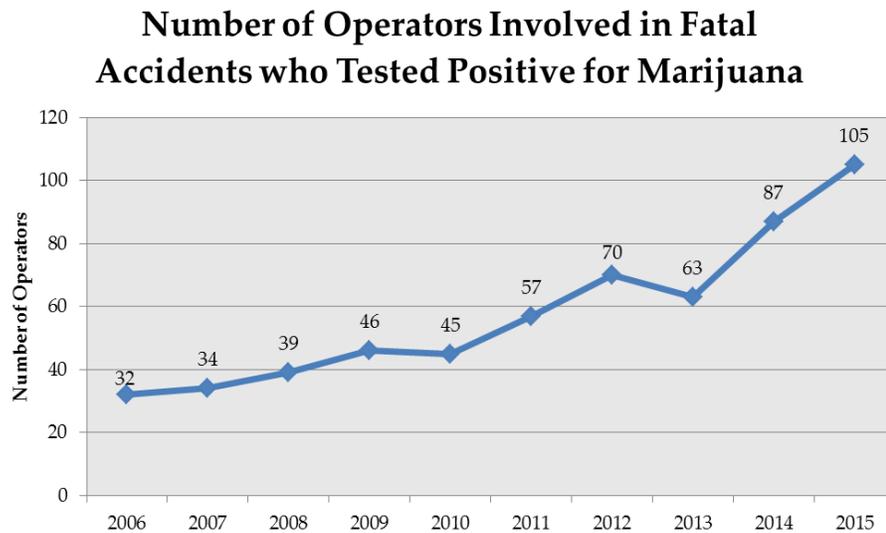
Colorado legalized medical marijuana in 2000 but only legalized cultivation and dispensaries in 2009, giving rise to an explosion of dispensaries in some areas of the state. Colorado legalized recreational marijuana in 2012, but no recreational pot shops opened until January 1, 2014. In 2013, Colorado initiated the Colorado Healthy

Kids Survey of some 40,000 middle and high school students. It divided the state into 21 regions, releasing data for the state in September 2014 and for the regions quite a bit later. Nationwide press coverage proclaimed that one year after legalization, Colorado high school students' marijuana use (36.9%) was lower than the national average (40.7%).

But that wasn't the whole story, illustrated above. Use is higher than the national average in some regions, lower in others. Why? There are nearly twice as many dispensaries in regions where use is higher, and that's *before* recreational pot shops opened for business. What will the 2014 Colorado Healthy Kids Survey show?

Marijuana Drugged Driving Impact:

Fatal crashes in Colorado and Washington due to marijuana impaired driving have increased significantly. The chart below is one example demonstrating the increase in deaths due to impaired driving.



Marijuana legalization advocates suggested legalizing marijuana would solve social justice issues related to marijuana enforcement and the disproportionate amount of arrests of minority populations for marijuana crimes. If we legalize marijuana, they say, we will solve this social justice issue. However, this problem has actually gotten worse since marijuana was legalized in Colorado. Refer to: [“Marijuana Related Arrests Skyrocket In Colorado For Black And Latino Minors”](#) The report shows that there has been a decrease in the rate of marijuana arrests for white youth, while the rate increased 58% for African American juveniles and the arrest rate of Latinos increased by 29%. The Black Market did not go away it actually became worse and created a Gray Market of people who can cultivate their own marijuana and sell it on the Gray Market, especially to youth.

In closing, I realize that every town in the Commonwealth is looking at having a “Commercial” Recreational Marijuana Dispensary as a potential revenue stream, but the problems and risks far out weight any financial benefits to our town. I am in support of the Town Meeting Articles Marijuana prohibiting commercial recreational sale of marijuana in our town.