

CANNABIS RIGHT TO KNOW ACT (SB 1097)

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THE PROBLEM

Increased Cannabis Use

- Cannabis use by CA teens age 12 to 17 increased significantly between 2016 and 2019.¹
- Cannabis use among pregnant women more than doubled from 2002 to 2017,² and in Northern California use rose by 25% during the pandemic, increasing the risk of low birth weight and other harms for the newborn.³
- 45 million US adults used cannabis in 2019, more than double how many used in 2008, and daily or near-daily users tripled in California in the last decade.⁴
- Everyone, including youth, are being increasingly exposed to cannabis advertising without counterbalancing health warnings of safer use information.⁵

Lack of Public Awareness of Health Risks

- The National Academies of Science concluded cannabis use is associated with motor vehicle crashes, psychosis and schizophrenia, low birth weight, worsening lung disease, and problem use.⁶
- Cannabis use during adolescence is especially risky to the developing brain, and particularly use of higher THC content products.⁷
- A recent NIH study of over 280,000 people found cannabis users, especially daily users and even those without major depression, were more likely to report suicidal ideation, plans and attempts.⁸
- Awareness of the harms from cannabis use is already low and continues to decline. Most people are unaware of even the simplest safer use practices, like “start low and go slow.”^{9,10}
- CA Emergency room visits for cannabis rose 53% between 2016 and 2019 including for pediatric poisoning, cannabis-induced psychosis, self-harm, drugged driving, cardiovascular effects, interactions with medications, and severe vomiting.

Current Cannabis Warnings Fail to Protect Consumers

Current labels fail to let consumers know accurately or effectively about cannabis health risks, because they are:

- Nearly invisible (required only in 6-point font);
- Not visually prominent or on front of the package;
- Missing key accepted current science, notably on mental health harms;
- Not presented in ways that effectively communicate health risks; &
- Do not mention the risks of cannabis products purchased from the illicit market, including mold, pesticides, heavy metals, or unsafe additives.

THE SOLUTION

No one should go to jail for using cannabis, but no one should go to the hospital either. As the California legal cannabis market matures and expands, there is an urgent need for more clear, prominent, accurate and comprehensive health information for California cannabis consumers. The retail adult-use market is thriving, growing 249% between 2018-2021. 83% of Americans think that where cannabis is legal, labels should help them identify safe, legal products.¹¹ The **Cannabis Right to Know Act** will make available more accurate and science-based health and safer-use information allowing Californians to make informed decisions when using California cannabis.

This bill will:

1. Require retailers to offer new consumers and make visibly available a CDPH and DCC designed one page flyer that:
 - Encourages legal over illicit cannabis purchases by including a why “Buy Legal” health message;
 - Provides unbiased facts regarding simple steps for safer use of cannabis, based on state of the science recommendations, like “Start low and go slow”;
 - Clearly communicates accurate information on key well-established cannabis associated health risks. These include harm to the infant exposed during pregnancy, car crashes, respiratory harms, serious mental health effects, and severe vomiting, particularly with frequent use of high potency products, and steps to reduce these risks.
2. Add warnings on key, currently omitted, mental health risks from cannabis use to cannabis product labels and inserts.

Health Warnings: Effective and Low-Cost Approach to Educating the Public

Labeling is an effective approach to educating the public at NO added cost to government or consumers. This law would simply add the mental health warnings to the checklist of existing requirements which the Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) already enforces for packaging and labeling. It will complement educational campaigns DCC currently funds to promote the legal market at no added cost to the state. The low cost to business of a one-page “safer use” brochure for consumers is far outweighed by expected savings enjoyed by families, insurers, employers (including cannabis businesses), local and state governments from reduced emergency room visits, accidental ingestions, mental health crises, and motor vehicle crashes. Recommended evaluation research can be funded by existing cannabis policy research funding designated in Proposition 64. There is absolutely no evidence that providing consumer information will help the illicit market.

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In Summary: A Safer, More Informed California Cannabis Consumer

Example: This very high potency flower product (30% THC) is clearly imitating to children (Cocoa Pebbles) and likely to attract youth. Its high THC content greatly increases the risk of consumers developing psychosis when using, especially if used frequently. Youth, especially boys, tend to be at highest risk. Yet there is no information in current warnings on these mental health risks and even existing warnings are hard to see.



THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS & INDIVIDUALS SUPPORT SB 1097

Organizations
A Night in Jail
Alcohol Justice
"American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing over 3,500 California licensed pediatricians"
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists - California
Artia strategies
Be the Influence
CA Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
California Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians
California Society of Addiction Medicine
Coalition for Drug Free Escondido
Coastal Communities Drug Free Coalition
Community Coalition
County Behavioral Health Directors Association - California
Day One
Drug Induced Homicide
East Bay Asian Youth Center
Eden Youth and Family Center
Empower Watsonville
First 5 Sacramento
Funding the Next Generation
Future Leaders of America
Health Officers Association of California
Helpline Youth Counseling, Inc.

Hermosa Coalition for Drug-Free Kids High Truths on Drugs and Addiction
Institute for Public Strategies
Kaiser Permanente
Khmer Girls in Action
Liberty Hill Foundation
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles Drug and Alcohol and Policy Alliance
Marin Prevention Network
Marin4PublicHealth.org
Moms Strong
Monterey County Prescribe Safe Initiative
North Coastal Prevention Coalition
Organization for Justice and Equality
Positive Alternatives Program/ Volunteers of America of Los Angeles
PRO Youth and Families
Public Health Advocates
Public Health Institute
Pueblo y Salud Inc.
Red Road Program
Restoring Justice for Indigenous People
RYSE
Sacramento Youth Center
SafeLaunch
San Dieguito Alliance for Drug Free Youth
San Marcos Prevention Coalition
Santa Clara County
SAY San Diego
SBCS Corporation
SCCAM-Shasta and Siskiyou Citizens Against

SCCAM-Shasta and Siskiyou Citizens Against Marijuana-An ATOD Coalition
Select Fiduciary Group LLC
Sigma Beta Xi Youth and Family Services
Social Model Recovery Systems
South East Community Alliance
Take Back America Campaign
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
West Contra Costa Alcohol Policy Coalition
Youth Forward

Individuals
Eydie Aldana
Debi Badger, Program Prevention Coordinator
Barton Bright
Hazel Bright
Rachel Ceasar, Assistant Professor, USC
Serena Chen, Consultant, Prevention
Stanton A. Glantz, PhD, UCSF Professor of Medicine (retired)
Rosalie Liccardo Pacula, Professor, Program Leader, University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy and USC Institute of Addiction Sciences
Pamela Ling, MD, Director, UCSF Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education
Sinclair Lor

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