

Marijuana Legalization – A Social Injustice

Where there are issues of systemic injustice and racism, legalization does not address the root of these issues and instead only exacerbates these problems by promoting increased drug use and the accompanying negative social consequences in disadvantaged communities

DISPARATE AND INCREASING ARREST RATES

In Denver, Colorado, African American arrests in 2017, the last year for which data are available, remain unchanged versus 2012. Hispanic and Asian arrests are up during the same period. (CDPS, 2018)

African Americans are twice as likely to be arrested for marijuana in Colorado and Washington, both states that have legalized recreational use and sales. (CJCJ, 2016)



2X Colorado's marijuana arrest rate for African Americans (233 per 100,000) was nearly double that of Caucasians (118 per 100,000) in 2017. (CDPS, 2018)

Marijuana arrests nearly tripled after legalization of marijuana in Washington, D.C. (Washington Post, 2017)



In Colorado, on-view arrests are up 26% since 2015 (1,074 to 1,353 in 2017). Blacks (39%) were 21% more likely to experience an on-view arrest than whites (18%) in 2017. (CDPS, 2018)

These disturbing stats correlate with the fact that in nearly every state that has legalized, the overall prison population has either stayed stable or, as in some states like Colorado and Washington D.C., it rose sharply after legalization following years of decline. (SAM, 2018)



DISPARATE SOCIAL COSTS

Employment

More African American workers surveyed work in a profession where they will be drug tested, compared to white workers. (Yale, 2013)



Health

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that 28% of women living in low-income areas tested positive for marijuana use during pregnancy. (Foeller & Lyell, 2017)



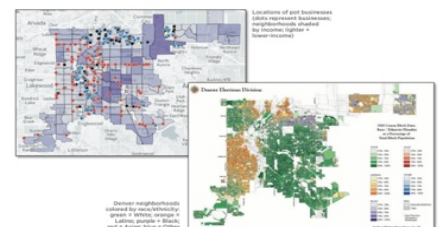
Youth

In states that have legalized marijuana, minority youth are showing much larger increases in use of marijuana than their Caucasian counterparts. (Johnson, 2018)



Pot Shops Dense in Poor Neighborhoods of Color (Migoya et al., 2016)

MARIJUANA BUSINESSES IN DENVER ARE CONCENTRATED IN NEIGHBORHOODS OF COLOR



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