

What Are They Smoking in Colorado?

Well, pot sales in Colorado have been doing so well that the governor has announced his plans to put some of the unexpected tax revenues toward substance-abuse prevention and youth **marijuana** use prevention. What in the world is he smoking?

In reality, Gov. John Hickenlooper is an outspoken critic of his state's legalization of pot, stating, "I hate Colorado having to be the experiment."

All of which makes the current situation all the more ironic.

It would be similar to announcing that cigarette prices will be dropped dramatically in order to increase sales so that additional funds can be generated for the study of lung cancer.

Or that McDonald's has been encouraged by the government to introduce extra-fatty, triple-super-sized meals with the caveat that they donate part of the profits to obesity prevention.

Or that drunk-driving laws will be relaxed so that more traffic tickets can be given out, with the increased revenue used to educate the public on the dangers of driving while intoxicated.

Are these analogies any crazier than what is now taking place in Colorado?

As reported by AP News, "The spending plan included \$45.5 million for youth use prevention, \$40.4 million for substance abuse treatment and \$12.4 million for public health."

In his letter to legislative budget writers, Gov. Hickenlooper wrote, "We view our top priority as creating an environment

where negative impacts on children from **marijuana legalization** are avoided completely.”

What? Your state legalizes **recreational marijuana use**, sales of the drug then skyrocket, and your top priority is to create an environment “where negative impacts on children from marijuana legalization are avoided completely”?

Does the governor really think that with the new easier access to marijuana, coupled with the removal of the “illegal” taboo, kids won’t have more access to the drug? Does he really think that as more parents are getting high more freely, the kids under their care won’t be negatively impacted?

The only way to completely avoid negative impacts on children is to do the opposite of what Colorado has done—and even then, the negative impact on kids couldn’t be completely avoided.

Instead, the state of Colorado has turned on the sprinkler system and is now trying to keep the kids dry. This is nothing less than moral and legislative insanity.

According to the report, “The governor also proposed a \$5.8 million, three-year ‘statewide media campaign on **marijuana use**,’ presumably highlighting the drug’s health risks.”

What? You make the drug legal, even though it has been the gateway drug for harder drug use for decades, your state celebrates this newfound liberty in very public ways, and you use tax revenue from marijuana sales to fund a “statewide media campaign on marijuana use”?

Last November, a report from Seattle noted, “More drivers have been testing positive for marijuana since Washington legalized the drug last year, according to new figures from the State Patrol.

“In the first six months of 2013, the patrol’s crime lab says, 745 people tested positive for marijuana. Typically, there are

about 1,000 positive pot tests on drivers in a full year.”

And while there are different explanations for these numbers, even Kevin Sabet, of Project SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana), says, “It’s certainly cause for alarm. It’s very possible people are getting the message that this is OK. Obviously, impaired driving is a major public safety issue.”

Not to worry. Gov. Hickenlooper and his team have this covered too. According to his proposal, “The state Department of Transportation would get \$1.9 million for a new ‘Drive High, Get a DUI’ campaign to tout the state’s new marijuana blood-limit standard for drivers.”

That should do it.

In fact, I have a proposal for the people of Colorado: Why stop with **marijuana**? After all, both hard liquor and beer are legal, so why not follow suit with drugs?

Just think of all the funds that could be generated if cocaine and Ecstasy and heroin and a host of other drugs were legalized. The profits would be mind-boggling, and with the new tax revenues, just think of all the drug prevention programs that could be funded.

Which leads me back to my question: What are they smoking in Colorado?

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