

Cannabis Decriminalization

Texas A&M's Students for Sensible Drug
Policy



Overview of Today's Presentation

AGGIE ANECDOTE

BACKGROUND: WAR ON DRUGS

ESTABLISHING COMMON TERMINOLOGY

SUCCESSFUL MODELS IN TEXAS

OUR PROPOSAL

SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY

RELEVANT STATISTICS





We are Texas A&M's chapter of Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP)

SSDP is the largest national youth-led network dedicated to ending the War on Drugs.

We bring young people of all political and ideological orientations together to have honest conversations about drugs and drug policy.

SSDP does not condemn nor condone drug use.

A little bit of history...

What is the *War on Drugs*?

In 1971, Richard Nixon declared the “war on drugs.” Which was primarily used to target black communities and the countercultural left, as stated by John Ehrlichman – Nixon’s aide. Standing firm, Nixon rejected his appointed, republican led, committee’s unanimous decision to decriminalize possession and distribution of cannabis for personal use.

How has the *War on Drugs* impacted our community?

Within the Texas A&M Crime Logs, it is seen that several arrests take place regarding cannabis possession & drug paraphernalia each month.

These arrests often have consequences such as suspension or expulsion.

Beyond academic consequences, there are also housing and employment complications that may arise when charged.

Successful Models in Texas

LOCAL NEWS

Plano Police Department Changes Marijuana Arrest Policy; Will Other North Texas Cities Follow?



APRIL 2, 2021 / 6:10 PM / CBS TEXAS



Fort Worth councilman calls for decriminalizing marijuana possession up to 4 ounces

By Dionne Anglin | Published March 7, 2023 5:18PM | Updated March 8, 2023 2:27PM | Cannabis | FOX 4 |

Politics

Yee-haw! Austin officially decriminalizes marijuana

Max Savage Levenson

Published on May 9, 2022 · Last updated May 11, 2022



LOCAL NEWS

Denton City Council battles over plan to decriminalize marijuana possession

More than 70% of voters approved the proposition in November, which would apply to low-level marijuana citations

Aggie's lives destroyed

John Doe was a student at A&M. He was arrested for possession of 0.12 g of THC in a vape. He is being prosecuted by the Brazos county DA for a felony drug charge and 4 years in prison.

Aggie Crime Log

Seventeen students arrested for possession of marijuana on campus last month alone according to UPD.

Crime Log: 2/1/2023 - 3/8/2023

Case No.	Case Source	Date Reported				
23-0127-0001	UPD	01/27/2023 01:14				
Reported As	General Location	Occurred Start	Occurred End	Approximate Dates	On Campus	Disposition
Possession of Marijuana < 2 oz	PA 40B	01/27/2023 01:14	01/27/2023 02:47	No	Yes	Referred
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Defining Terms

Legalization

The removal of legal prohibition against the use and possession of cannabis. Legalization opens the possibility of a regulated market.



Decriminalization

The removal of criminal sanctions surrounding the possession of cannabis. Cannabis will remain illegal, however no individuals will be prosecuted for simple possession (<4 ounces)

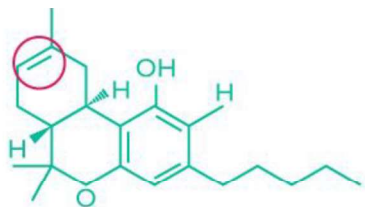
Depenalization

Existing criminal sanctions are not used for cannabis possession. It does not require changes to legislation.

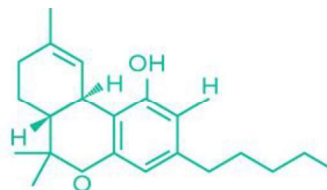
Can you tell the difference?

One is legal to possess in the state of Texas, the other is not





No



Without expensive lab equipment, you cannot tell the difference with confidence. Legal cannabinoids can produce false positives in field tests.



Legal



Illegal



What are we proposing?




Decriminalization for **misdemeanor** amounts of marijuana possession and to stop $\Delta 9$ THC concentration testing by the city.





Our proposal

- We propose to end citations and arrests for misdemeanor levels of possession in College Station
 - If there is probable cause, the substance can be seized
 - A drug paraphernalia charge would not be issued in lieu of a possession of marijuana charge
 - We propose that no city funds or personnel should be used to conduct THC concentration testing
 - No city funds or personnel should be used to request, conduct, or obtain THC testing of any cannabis-related substance to determine whether the substance meets the legal definition of marijuana under state law.
- 

*Except in limited circumstances

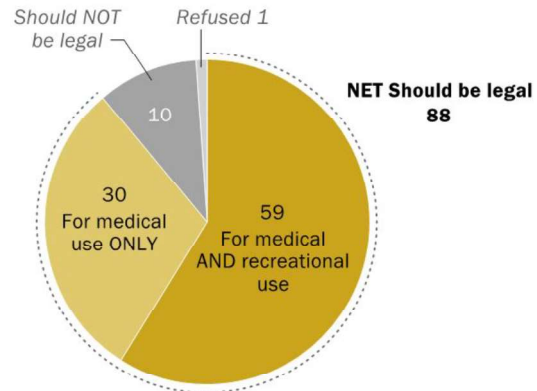
Austin Ordinance NO. 20220118-002



Relevant Facts & Statistics

Just one-in-ten U.S. adults say marijuana should not be legal at all

% of U.S. adults who say marijuana ...

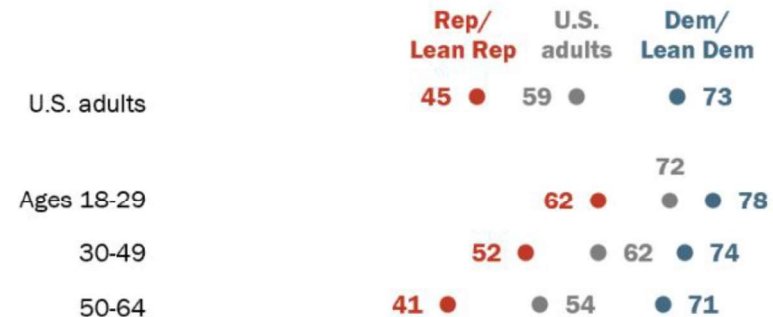


Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 10-16, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

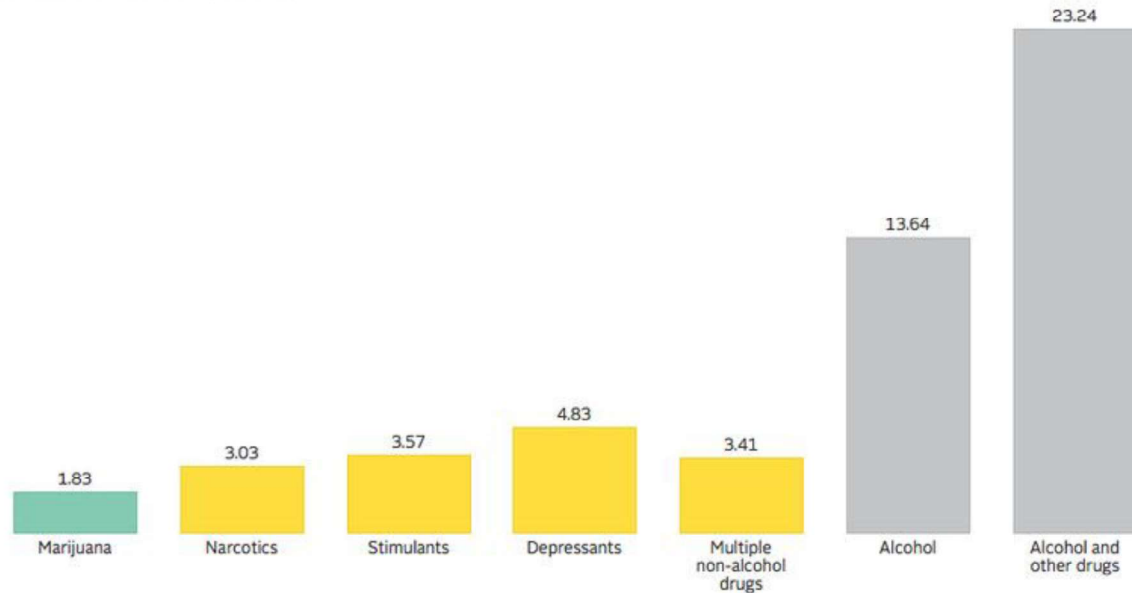
Wide age differences in both parties in views of legalizing marijuana for medical and recreational use

% who say marijuana should be legal for **medical AND recreational** use



Relevant Facts & Statistics

Multiplied risk of a fatal traffic accident while under the influence



Source: Columbia University study



Relevant Facts & Statistics

