

Coalition for
**RESPONSIBLE
DRUG POLICIES**

Sponsored by the California Public Safety Institute

SAM *Action* Smart
Approaches to
Marijuana
preventing another big tobacco

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Grassroots Guide
CALIFORNIA
Election 2016

**Pushing back
against
legalization in
your state:
Working Together
for Success!**

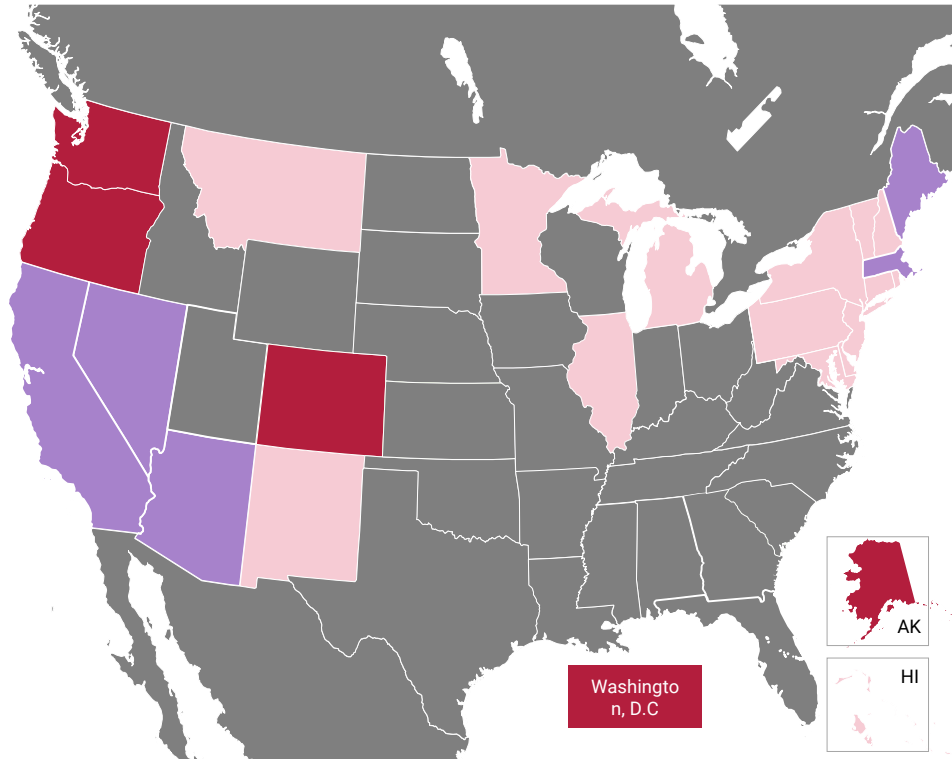
Overview

1 What is at stake

2 The talking points to emphasize

3 How to be heard

A structured outreach campaign to defeat legalization is key



Legend:

- = "Recreational" use legalized
- = "Medical" use legalized
- = "Medical" use legalized; 2016 initiative to legalize "recreational" use

- Working with your state campaign and SAM Action, **this presentation has information to help you get involved.**
- To be effective, it is important to:
 - **Have discipline** in following the main talking points of the campaign; and
 - **Deliver these talking points** via (free) traditional and social media in your state.

You can make a difference!

- Despite the rhetoric, legalization in California is **NOT inevitable**
- The marijuana lobby's last two big pushes **failed** – in **Ohio (2015) and Vermont (2016)**
- This happened because of **focused campaigns and disciplined grassroots activism**
- **You can be a part of this success!**

The California initiative: basics

- **Title:** Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act, No. 15-0103
- **Full text:** Available [here](#)
- **Sponsors:** **The marijuana industry and a Silicon Valley billionaire are the major players.** The large marijuana-related online content company Weedmaps has donated \$500,000, and Sean Parker has contributed \$1 million so far. The Drug Policy Alliance has also given \$500,000.

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Stick to a few main California talking points

- Legalization in California is all about one thing: **money – it's about making a few people rich. It's Big Tobacco all over again.**
- The initiative **allows pot shops in your neighborhoods**—where your children live—to sell **kid-friendly pot products like lollipops and gummy bears** that are easily mistaken for ordinary candy. Since Colorado legalized marijuana, **it has the highest rate of youth pot use in the nation—a rate 70% higher** than the national average.
- This initiative would **allow heroin and meth dealers** to get into the pot business.

Stop here if you are writing a letter to the editor, short article, social media post, or giving a quote to a media outlet – it's important to be brief and stick to just a couple of talking points, especially in the age of digital media

If you need more material (1/2)

- **Do you really want a pot shop in your neighborhood**, and the smell of marijuana pervading your playgrounds, parks, sidewalks, and apartment complexes?
- A recent University of California, San Francisco report titled *Legalized Marijuana Could Hurt Public Health* says the initiative contains “**minimal protections for public health.**”
- Parkview Hospital Emergency Room in Colorado wrote recently that since recreational marijuana has been legal in that state, the hospital has seen a **51% increase in children 18 and under that test positive for marijuana**. Nearly half of all newborns born in that hospital also **tested positive for pre--natal marijuana exposure**.

If you need more material (2/2)

- A **coalition of Democrats, Republicans, law enforcement organizations**, and groups like the California Hospital Association all oppose this initiative.
- Despite the rhetoric, **legalization is not inevitable in California** – a recent poll featured in the San Jose Mercury News even found **Bay Area voters split 50/50**.

Agenda

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How can you be heard?

- **Write the editorial board** of your local newspaper and ask to meet with them about this issue
- Send [opinion pieces to your local paper](#) or appear on your local radio station
- Write and [submit letters to the editor](#) (these are shorter than opinion pieces, typically ~200 words)
- **Speak to local civic organizations**, parent groups, community coalitions, etc. to help spread the word and educate the public to speak out against this measure
- **Write your state and local elected officials** and ask them to publicly oppose the ballot initiative
- Write short **Facebook & [social media posts](#)**
- Ask local **health and medical organizations** to speak out (see, e.g., [this resolution by the National Alliance on Mental Illness](#))
- **Speak at city councils, neighborhood councils, city commissions or city boards** about marijuana issues (see this [sample city council resolution](#))

Press outreach

- **Los Angeles Times**
 - Juliet Lapidos, Op-Ed Page Editor
 - Email: juliet.lapidos@latimes.com
 - Phone: 213-237-5000
- **San Diego Union Tribune**
 - Blanca Gonzalez, Community Opinion Editor
 - Email: blanca.gonzalez@sduniontribune.com
 - Phone: 619-293-1211
- **Orange County Register**
 - Brian Calle, Op-Ed Page Editor
 - Email: bcalle@ocregister.com
 - Phone: 714-796-2824
- **San Francisco Chronicle**
 - Lois Kazakoff, Deputy Editorial Page Editor
 - Email: lkazakoff@sfchronicle.com
 - Phone: 415-777-6054
- **Sacramento Bee**
 - Gary Reed, Forum Editor
 - Email: greed@sacbee.com
 - Phone: 916-321-1909

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