

**Submission
No 51**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE REGULATORY
FRAMEWORK FOR CANNABIS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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* Cannabis is illegal in NSW but is regulated in a similar manner to alcohol for driving under the influence. Thus effectively sanctioning an illegal drug in the community.

* The illegality of cannabis has stymied its medicinal production and agricultural production for food and fibre, and its potential value to the NSW economy.

* As a fibre cannabis is an ecologically sustainable crop in requiring less water input than cotton production, which would be an environmental benefit particularly for the Murray-Darling Basin.

* The illegality but ready availability of cannabis in the community is underpinned by a moral conceit, harbouring official corruption, criminal activity and an inadvertent political influence to maintain the status quo.

* As a prohibited drug cannabis use and its possession is a criminal offence. Notwithstanding, possession of a small quantity is now considered a minor offence and subject to a Police caution. However past offenders subject to a criminal conviction remain criminalised (albeit spent), which is unethical and of no benefit to the community.