

**Submission  
No 70**

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

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**Date Received:** 10 May 2024

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While New South Wales and Australia generally was once a leading light in harm reduction, we have fallen seriously behind other OECD countries in legalising cannabis.

There is ample evidence that the continued illegality of cannabis has caused enormous long term harm in terms of allowing organised crime to deeply infiltrate, and that one reason alone should be enough to change the law! It also continues to burden the criminal justice system by taking away limited resources from actual crime, and has also corrupted our law enforcement on many occasions, and all for zero benefit. Zero.

It is inexplicable that NSW has not taken the steps to either fully decriminalise or legalise marijuana usage, most especially now that medical marijuana is now easily obtainable for those who can afford it. I also note that Germany has recently joined the list of European countries that have fully legalised or decriminalised cannabis.

It's absurd that recreational marijuana use is still a criminal justice issue after what, 50-60 years of common usage in the community? Under the current law, as it stands, a good percentage of parliamentarians and parliamentary staffers are merely "uncharged criminals" having used marijuana! An absurd situation that harks back to when sodomy was a crime.

It's overtime to join the 21st century and put the 'war on drugs' behind us as a society. And as it stands the people who are most effected by the current situation are the poor and the young. How obscene.

Please take courage and do what you all know is right. Listen to medical professionals and decades of global research, instead of worrying about what the Daily Telegraph will say, whilst we all know that most of the staff at that newspaper themselves will have used, or some still do use marijuana as they type out scary drivel directed by their editors.

As you know from recent elections, a healthy % of voters have decided to vote on this 'one' issue above all others, just to send politicians a message that enough is enough. There is hunger across the community for this bleeding sore to be finally seen to.

I personally have smoked marijuana socially - a puff at a party, and I enjoyed the occasional joint as a younger person! Should I expect a visit now from the NSW Police after a lifetime of not having even gotten a speeding ticket, and have worked all my life and paid my taxes etc?

And while there are legitimate issues around mental health, there is a lot of good evidence that too high levels of THC hydroponically grown marijuana by organised criminals can often be a factor, and this sort of \*knowledge and information\* for young consumers, and the ability for them to have the option to use cannabis which is not high in THC would be a good thing, especially for vulnerable youth. Information and accessibility for low strength cannabis (or no THC) like is already available in medical marijuana, which is now widely available and legal.

And bonus, all the budget savings from the criminal justice pursuit of personal marijuana usage can then be used for mental health services which is where these funds should be being spent.

Only a few months ago I witnessed eight police officers (eight) at Bondi Junction station with sniffer dogs surrounding a young male backpacker. I was first angry at this total waste of \*my taxes\* being used to entrap and harass commuters at my station, rather being used to investigate actual crime, but I was more ashamed that this well dressed young traveller was so fearful, and was being made to sit on the platform surrounded by heavily armed NSW police officers and sniffer dogs, being bodily searched, his possessions etc and being treated like a thief or rapist or whatever.

Change the laws yesterday for god's sake. Enough is enough!!