

House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Testimony for CACR19 and HB1235-FN

by Sue Homola, SAM NH Chairman

Overview

- Enshrining the right to possess a federally illegal drug at the state level is legislatively irresponsible.
- The term "modest amount" is subjective and undefined, which would make it difficult for law enforcement to identify violations of the law. (CACR19)
- Today's high-potency, psychoactive marijuana has been proven to be detrimental to users of all ages, and especially users age of 25 and younger. It is detrimental to users age 25 and below because the human brain does not mature until age 25 (or older in some cases), and marijuana usage re-wires the brain. Marijuana legality should not be tied to the same age requirements as alcohol.

Negative Effects of Legalization in Neighboring States

Vermont: Has the highest rate of 13- to 17- year-olds in the nation with a Cannabis Use Disorder.

Maine: This state is struggling with hundreds of cartel-operated, illegal marijuana farms, which operate in plain sight due to the state's legalization laws. Black market activity actually gets more prolific in states who legalize because cartels can operate more openly under legalization laws.

Massachusetts: Voters are having legalization regrets. In December 2025 the Coalition for a Healthy Massachusetts submitted 74,000 voter signatures to put a question on the 2026 state ballot to repeal the commercial sale of recreational marijuana. This effort needs to be approved by the legislature. If the legislature does not support the effort, then the coalition can override their decision by collecting 12,000 more signatures and getting the measure on the state ballot anyway. (Josh Code, "Could Massachusetts Become the First State to Undo Legal Weed?," n.d., <https://thedrugreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/The-Free-Press-Could-Massachusetts-Become-the-First-State-to-Undo-Legal-Weed.pdf>.)

The Attitudes Towards Legalization are Trending Downward

Now that the negative effects of legalization are being seen in many communities and families, the risks and harms of marijuana use are hard to ignore. Gallup polls now find that a majority of Americans believe marijuana is having a negative affect on society and the user. This is a direct inverse of these poll result in 2022, in every category measured. **(Please see chart on next page.)**

SAM NH RECOMMENDATION:

Do not pass CACR19 or HB1235-FN

Change in Perceived Positive Effect of Marijuana on Most Who Use It, Among Subgroups, 2022 vs. 2024

What effect do you think the use of marijuana has on most people who use it -- very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative?

%Very/Somewhat positive

	2022	2024	2022-2024 change
	%	%	(pct. pts.)
Total U.S. adults	53	43	-10
Marijuana use			
Have ever tried marijuana	69	61	-8
Have not tried marijuana	35	30	-5
Age group			
18-34	65	58	-7
35-54	56	46	-10
55+	43	31	-12
Party identification			
Democrat	62	53	-9
Independent	56	44	-12
Republican	39	31	-8
Religious service attendance			
Seldom/Never	65	52	-13
Nearly weekly/Monthly	42	34	-8
Weekly	34	29	-5

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