

Gary Anderson

13<sup>th</sup> March 2015

*Songs of Freedom and Dances of Peace Revival*

*Soldiers of Sanity, Saviours from Stupidity, Mad as Heaven*

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Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Members of the Committee,

I wish to make a second submission

I advise you of this most recent political action with respect to marihuana in the USA which is very relevant. This is a link to the Bloomberg article.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2015-03-04/texas-republican-mounts-pro-marijuana-campaign-bible-in-hand>

about State Texas Republican Representative David Simpson

I copy the article here.

Did God give us marijuana for a reason?

It sounds like a stoner question, but a conservative Christian lawmaker in Texas is arguing that since God made cannabis, the government should regulate it like any other plant.

State Representative David Simpson of Longview introduced a bill Monday that would remove any mention of marijuana from Texas law, and set the plant to be regulated like tea or tomatoes. If Simpson's bill passed, it would place sales and property taxes on buyers and growers, respectively, but it wouldn't be marked up with a so-called sin tax.

**"The plant is good. God made it, and it wasn't a mistake that government needs to fix."**

State Representative David Simpson

"I usually don't use my Christian convictions so publicly," Simpson said during a phone interview Wednesday. But after seeing some of his fellow Christians suffer under current pot laws, particularly laws banning medical marijuana, he said he felt the need to be more vocal. "We need to love not only our liberties, but the liberties of our neighbor."

For Simpson, the biblical case (which he also outlined in a *Texas Tribune* op-ed) boils down to two arguments: first, that all of God's creations are good. "What's so incredible to me is that we want to eliminate something that God made," Simpson said. "It's very specific in Genesis 1. He talks about the green herb, he talks about plant, he talks about their seed, and it says it was good, it was very good."

Second, he said, the government's role should be to punish people who are doing wrong. Marijuana users, especially medical-marijuana users, aren't hurting people. He cited Proverbs 3:30, which reads, "Do not contend with a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm," and verses from Romans 13 that say the role of the civil magistrate is to punish wrongdoers. He argued that people should be free to use cannabis for its positive medicinal and commercial purposes, like treating seizures, assisting cancer patients, or creating rope and paper.

Simpson also makes the traditional limited-government arguments against cannabis criminalization. Americans should have the freedom to choose how to use marijuana, and if a person chooses to use the drug irresponsibly, the solution "is not to prosecute them and separate them from their family, but to lovingly engage them and be their friend," he said.

One problem Simpson's bill might face is its failure to address regulatory questions. One concern leading up to the legalization of marijuana in Colorado and Washington, for example, was the risk of "diversion," in which cheap, legal pot spreads into other states where it's still illegal.

Another issue is his fellow lawmakers. Simpson said that 90 percent of his constituents support the idea, but his colleagues are cautious. (Drug-policy expert Gary Hale put it more bluntly to the *Houston Chronicle*: "A blanket decriminalization of marijuana and classification as a vegetable is not going to happen.")

"I think what's standing behind some of the hesitancy is fear, and it does take a little living by faith at this point in time, but it's the right thing to do," Simpson said. "The plant is good. God made it, and it wasn't a mistake that government needs to fix."

For an excellent discussion on a top US news/radio with Representative Simpson from 1.30.00 <https://youtu.be/jUOW6dxg6t4>

Thank you

*Gary L. Anderson*

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