

AGEM

Australian Gratuitous Economical Metabolic

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

Regarding: The Criminal Code and Other Legislation Amendment (Removing Commonwealth Restrictions on Cannabis) Bill 2018

Dear Secretary,

AGEM would like to thank the Senate, for the opportunity to provide this submission regarding the provisions of The Criminal Code and Other Legislation Amendment (Removing Commonwealth Restrictions on Cannabis) Bill 2018.

You can not expect a smile on every face with the pass of this Bill that would allow any State or Territory Government to legalise and regulate cannabis. However, as long as the right provisions are made to counter-act any negative implications that passing this Bill could have, there could be a number of welcomed bennefits for the community, if this Statute legislation is implemented in a practical and knowledgeable way.

Some of those benefits may include; medicinal purposes, greater access to scientific research of the cannabis plant, tax revenue, tourism attractions of speciality Licensed Shop's and Cafe's that provide various refreshment/consumables prepared with Cannabis as a key ingredient, and also a more personal benefit to those who choose to use Cannabis for recreational purposes.

Encouraging people to make responsible choices is a key factor, to the passing of this Bill. Therefore, there is an obligation for the State government to provide the community with relevant information, so that consumers are able to make well-informed decisions regarding the use of cannabis.

AGEM would like to recommend the following provisions for the State or Territory Government :

- The allocation of zoning locations for the Licenced suppliers and cafes to operate.
- Provisions for age restrictions for the sale and use of Cannabis.
- Community provided Drug rehabilitation programmes for people who want to reform from Cannabis use. (Without age restriction).
- The legal obligation Cannabis Licenced Grower's and suppliers, to have to make available a vast amount of information to consumers on Cannabis use. Including, the difference in chemical composition of hydroponics and naturally grown cannabis, and the effect and damage caused by hydroponic Cannabis, when used regularly.
- Requirements for testing to be done to ascertain the strength of (THC) **delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol** in various strains of Cannabis. Consumer information for strength indications of different strains of cannabis and consumable products.
- A structured guideline to the maximum level or strength of the cannabis (THC), in food items that can be sold. (You don't want people to eat a piece of space cake and pass out for 3 hours).
- Limits to the amount of Cannabis one person can purchase, grow, and store at home.
- Mandatory Tests to be done for any toxic chemicals that should not be present on the cannabis plant, caused by the grower using toxic pesticides or herbicides and not washing the plant thoroughly prior to harvesting. Only non-toxic chemicals should be used for any plant grown for consumption eaten or otherwise.
- Cannabis sold as 'organically grown' must be certified.
- Most importantly, the necessary consumer warnings to avoid cannabis consumption when pregnant.
- National consumer warnings advertised on Television etc. regarding smoking outside and keeping the air clean for children and not smoking cannabis near or around children, as it can affect the child's brain development. Especially, newborn babies, who are susceptible to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Even cannabis smoke particles trapped on a person's clothing could be enough to cause a baby to suffer from SIDS, and people who smoke cannabis need to be aware of this factor. (Don't smoke a joint/any drug and then cuddle an infant).
- Large signs and notifications at International Airports, and advertisements to warn people who use Cannabis to check their luggage thoroughly. Notifications from the

Airline to be given to passengers to remind them that cannabis is not permitted to leave on board flights due to the restrictions at their destination. A bud or two, found at the International Airport of a country such as Indonesia, could land the person responsible for carrying it, a 5-year imprisonment sentence or worse. It would be a very dangerous situation to find one's self when the situation was that they were just too stoned to remember where they put the lost bag of 'pot' and totally forgot about it.

- Provisions for the Legal international trade Laws and the prosecution of people who deal in Cannabis outside the legal framework.
- Provisions in the Criminal Code for the prosecution of persons who use cannabis and operate a vehicle, aircraft or machinery, due to cannabis causing a delayed response in a critical situation, that may endanger other people's lives, as well as their own.

It is essential to ensure that people who are affected by the new Law, are able to make well-informed decisions, regarding the use of Cannabis.

This is of particular importance for teenagers in the community. As it may become a greater concern for peer-pressure on teenager's to use Cannabis. It is imperative that we teach our teenager's to make responsible decisions and provide them with the knowledge that they need to make well-informed decisions with regards to Cannabis use. There is little information provided to teenagers regarding the effects and dangers of Cannabis use during the teenage years when their bodies are still developing and subject to changing hormonal levels, so teenager's may be making decisions 'blind', so to speak. Within the National School Curriculum, there needs to be a module focused on 'Drug Education and Prevention', and greater emphasis upon good old fashion respect, for other's choices to say 'No', because the passing on this Bill will make Cannabis more readily available to teenager's. (The principle of Respect is also a concept that is greatly related to the growing concerns of Cyber bullying).

Provisions for age restrictions for the sale and use of Cannabis is obviously an important factor, but like most things, the age restriction may very well act as an enticing factor for some young teens who are wanting to experiment and who are aiming to assume more control in their decisions, and may feel they are not given the freedom that they may feel they deserve, to make decisions for themselves. That is why the government must ensure teenagers are well informed to make decisions regarding cannabis use.

Also information on the effects of the cannabis hormones on users in their teenage years when their hormones are developing and in a transitional stage into adulthood. This may cause long-term effects in the teenager, due to the increased amount of the cannabis plant estrogen, that is very similar to human estrogen. Plant estrogen is present in high levels, in the female cannabis

buds, the most commonly used part of the cannabis plant for smoking. The additional increase of any hormone, will make our own body produce less of that hormone, and this can put the chemical hormone balance out in teenagers. Males and Female teenager's who frequently use cannabis could be affected by a sudden increase in the hormone estrogen, and then suffer from lower levels of their own natural hormone estrogen production, and the imbalance may have a number of hormonal complications when they are an adult as a result.

E.g. Your Hormones on Cannabis

Heavy cannabis use can affect hormones in both males and females:

Cortisol: THC **raises cortisol**. This means you may not **feel as chillax'ed as you might expect** – you may even feel **paranoid if you have an issue with big stress**.

Prolactin: THC **lowers prolactin**. Since prolactin provides the body with sexual gratification, this may not be something you want.

Ovulation: Among women, regular marijuana use can **disrupt the normal monthly menstrual cycle** and inhibit the discharge of eggs from the ovaries.

Puberty: Onset of puberty may be delayed in young men.

Sperm: Marijuana also can have **adverse effects on sperm production**.

<http://www.saragottfriedmd.com/top-10-brain-and-hormone-effects-of-marijuana/>

Mental illnesses thought to be caused by the abuse of Cannabis: Included in the provisions for this legislation should be the requirements for greater information regarding the effects of cannabis use, including the abuse of this drug as a seditive from an agitated state, that causes substance induced bi-polar and sckitziphrener. This can continue as a substanced induced psychosis, long after the person has stoped using the drug Cannabis. This is due to the sudden chemical reaction change from highly agitated state to a docile state of being. Which is caused by the body's chemical reaction that is suddenly changed when a person smokes cannabis, from the release of chemicals in the brain. This sudden change, then causes the body to change suddenly, in other circumstances, without the use of cannabis, such as what is seen in Bi-polar and can lead to substance-induced Schizophrenia. **Always claim yourself down naturally before smoking Cannabis, wait ten minutes or as long as you need to be fully calm, with your mind and heart beat to a normal state, before smoking cannabis. This will help prevent you from suffering from substance induced bi-polar and sckitziphrener.**

The importance of educating teenager's and adults about this factor can not be underestimated because the repercussions can be a long term mental illness, that will be far reaching into the person's life and family, and the community.

Commercial grower's and private grower's for personal use, need information such as the use of natural pestisides, and the consequences and effects on the user, if highly toxic pestisides are used and not washed from the plants before harvesting. (Garlic and Lavender and Tea tree oil

boiled in water, cooled and then sprayed onto the plant, can make a very powerful natural pesticide).

Providing consumer information on the chemical hormones in cannabis, that has been grown by means of hydroponics, and the damages that these chemicals have to the brain and other organs of the body. Providing information that shows the difference between using outdoor grown cannabis, compared to hydroponically grown cannabis. Especially important for regular/frequent users who choose to smoke a lot of cannabis.

If this law is passed please ensure that there are sufficient warnings for the very serious consequences for forgetting about that 'lost bag' of cannabis, that is somewhere tucked away in a pocket of their travel luggage. It would be a shame to see any person who got a flight from Australia, and who had mindlessly forgotten to check all their pockets of their travel luggage or backpack, and rushed off for their flight to another country, without realizing they had a small amount of cannabis on them, and entered into a country that has little or no tolerance, for cannabis.

One thing Australia should avoid at all costs is passing a Bill to legalize cannabis without incorporating the necessary requirements, so that the legislation promotes a safe and well-ordered community both now and in the future, and by ensuring that this new Law will be governed competently by the local State or Territory authorities, when making Cannabis legal and accessible to the community.

The Federal Government may find it helpful to seek information regarding this Bill, from The Netherlands government. Cannabis is not legal all throughout The Netherlands, however, Amsterdam has had Cannabis legalized for many years, and I am sure that the Dutch Government would be only too happy to help by parting with some wisdom in relation to the legalization of Cannabis.

Thank you, for reading this submission. AGEM sincerely hopes that the Senate Committee finds this information helpful for considerations regarding the provisions of the Bill to remove Commonwealth restrictions on Cannabis.

Yours sincerely,

AGEM

Written by A McCaffrey

Here are some useful websites with information on this topic.

National Institute on Drug Abuse. "Marijuana Facts: Parents Need to Know." Accessed May 27, 2014. <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana-facts-parents-need-to-know>

"A Fact Sheet on the Effects of Marijuana." [PBS.org](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/dope/body/effects.html), accessed May 28, 2014. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/dope/body/effects.html>; Nudell DM, Monoski MM, Lipshultz LI. "Common medications and drugs: how they affect male fertility." *Urologic Clinics of North America* 29 (4) (2002): 965-73.

[Organic Against Chemical Marijuana Growing](#)

[Hormones for Enhanced Growth - Growing Marijuana](#)

[Nutrient and Chemical Interactions in Marijuana Growing ...](#)

*CANNABIS CULTURE - The **chemical** interactions within your nutrient ... Nutrient and Chemical Interactions in Marijuana Growing ... A hydroponic nutrient solution ...*

[The Complete Guide To Growing Marijuana Naturally](#)

www.ilovegrowingmarijuana.com › [Blog](#) ›

*No one wants to smoke **chemical** laden buds? If you **grow marijuana**, ... Using **natural** nutrients in a **hydroponics** ... purchased rooting **hormone** and I have had a very ...*

[hydroponics vs aeroponic or soil | Cannabis.com - The ...](#)

boards.cannabis.com › [Growing](#) ›

18/10/2006 · The overall THC levels of **weed** in general has sky rocketed since the birth of **Hydroponic grown weed** ... **chemicals** or a **chemical** taste, you can **grow** ... **Natural** ...