




# ANALYSIS

## CANNABIS LEGALISATION AND CONTROL BILL

The *new* face  
of Big Tobacco

Same corporates.  
Same objectives.  
Same addiction.  
New product. 

The government bill proposes:

### A minimum purchase and use age of 20

- Research shows that adolescents access alcohol and tobacco primarily through friends and family, not from retailers. Why would cannabis be any different? Given the draft law allows cannabis growing for personal use, it is highly likely that legalisation will result in increased access through young people's social networks, and through the gangs / black market operating outside their school gate.
- By legalising the drug, **young people will see drug use as normalised**, their perceived risk of harm related to drug use will decrease, and their use will increase.



### Purchase & possession would be limited to 14 grams a day per person

- That's a purchase allowance of anywhere from **30–40 joints, every** day, per person!
- You can also legally carry those 30–40 joints at any time.
- These limits will be virtually impossible to police. Do we stop and search **every** person?



### Anyone will be allowed to grow two plants for personal use, and up to four per household

- The problem with family homes being used as 'grows' is that dope dealers will simply stay under the radar with multi-location grows, and **children will be exposed to drug cultivation** – right in their backyard.
- Products can easily be diverted to the black market.
- A dealer could grow up to 9 plants and the fine if caught is between \$500 and \$1,000. But according to the police, one mature processed plant could be worth approximately \$1,000 street value.
- Home grows are not subject to quality control, potency controls or labelling requirements.
- The Police Association have admitted that the legal grow limits would be hard to police.




## Social sharing

- Up to 40 joints can be shared ‘socially’ – per person – per day!
- “Social sharing” is allowed as long as there is no ‘material benefit’ – but this is not defined, and how is this policed?
- This simply equates to ‘cash deals’ and ‘under-the-table’ trading.



## Edibles will be legal

- Many of these products are **targeted at young people**. Every other overseas jurisdiction has been engulfed with edibles, either through the legal market (Colorado, California), or through the black market (Uruguay, Canada). The market share of bud has fallen and the market share of THC-infused edibles and THC concentrates continues to rise.
  - Allowing edibles will encourage people to use cannabis who otherwise wouldn't have – especially young people. Banning specific child-friendly edibles such as gummi bears won't make any difference. The industry will simply adjust their product.
  - Allowing edibles can lead people to consume too much. Because the effect may be delayed, **it is harder to judge when to stop**.
  - THC concentrate can be mixed into almost any type of food or drink. The potency of edibles (several times that of an average joint) and their attractiveness to kids have led to serious problems in legalised states.
  - Because of legal 'home grows', the ability to make high-THC edibles and dabs – for example, butane hash oil – will occur and will be very difficult to police.
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## Prohibits consumption in public places, limits use to private homes

- SmokeFree 2025 – but a joint or edible in the home is fine – along with “social sharing” with other users.
- This sets a terrible example to young people and children about drug use, and risks their welfare if parents and others are under the influence of drugs in the home.

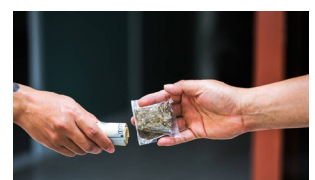


## Licenced premises

- These will be drug venues (cannabis coffee shops) including BYO cafes where cannabis consumption is normalised and effectively encouraged.
- These venues allow cannabis, cannabis products and accessories.

## Controls and regulations on the potency of cannabis

- THC levels (the psychoactive chemical in cannabis) are set at 15% THC for smoking. This is significantly higher than the Woodstock Weed of 2-4%.
- When the potency is *limited*, this will simply empower the black market and the gangs who will provide high-THC products demanded by users.



## 'Restrictions' on marketing and a 'ban' on advertising cannabis

- A legalised market simply opens the door to a powerful industry focused on maximising profits, not health.
- **As we know from the past actions of the tobacco industry, any restrictions on the cannabis industry's ability to advertise their product will either be flouted, lobbied against, or they will look for alternative ways to target their customer base.**
- Faced with limited advertising options, 'Big Marijuana' overseas are turning to cannabis 'influencers'. Advertising agencies use 'influencers' with tens of thousands of followers to those with millions of followers in order to dodge regulations, and to market their products.



## Limits sale of cannabis to specifically licenced physical stores (not online or remote sales)

- The internet is notoriously difficult to police, and it won't be difficult for consumers to find dealers with high potency products available for purchase who will flout any regulations.

## Harm minimisation messaging in the retailing of cannabis

- There is no explanation of what those specifically are – and the cannabis industry (like the tobacco and alcohol industry) will be desperate to *understate* the harms. For example, there is no mention of **psychosis, depression, anxiety or addiction**.

## State regime – all stages of the growing and supply chain are controlled by the government

- That means checking *every* home grow, *every* user for their age, testing *all* potencies, *all* licensed premises, management of associated waste products, offences and penalties for non-compliance – the list goes on. **This means that the police will be just as busy – if not busier.**
- The Police Association are concerned that one of the proposed benefits is to free up police resources, but that is not likely to happen. And if the 'legalisation and control' was to be closely monitored, that would put *more* demand on the police.
- Tax and pricing could also be a problem. If you can't drive the price down, that is not going to get rid of the black market.



# Missing From The Legislation

## NO specific controls around vaping

- It's this tiny device that's quickly taking over cannabis consumption – and young people love it, especially because it's so easy to hide, and produces little-to-no smell when consumed. You simply screw it into an inexpensive, rechargeable pen and inhale. One recent US study showed increased use by 14-18 year olds of newer forms of consumption – vaping and edibles.
- The only concern expressed in the bill is primarily around *emissions* from vaping



## NO power for local councils to regulate the location of drug shops – just ‘consultation’

- Local councils in consultation with their communities should be given the power to **control** the location of these drug retailers, and the power to ban them altogether, if so desired. This has been left to the Cannabis Regulatory Authority (s16).

## NO specific legislation around road safety measures

- The rights of people to be safe on the road outweighs the privilege of smoking weed. If a person has THC in their system, we don't want them on the road endangering other drivers and families. Roadside drug testing and the likelihood of increase in drivers driving stoned and causing fatalities on the road are being ignored. A Colorado survey in 2018 found 69% of marijuana users have driven under the influence in the past year, and 27% admitted to driving high almost **daily**. A New Zealand study found that **habitual users of marijuana have about 10 times the risk of car crash injury or death compared to infrequent or non-users**.



## NO specific legislation around workplace safety and workplace drug testing

- In the US, marijuana legalisation has had serious ramifications for businesses. Increased marijuana availability and use has increased the number of employees testing positive for marijuana in the workforce. In NZ's bill, there is no provisions relating to dealing with the added costs to the workforce in absenteeism, accidents, healthcare, additional workplace training and insurance premiums. Studies consistently show marijuana users have significantly lower levels of commitment to their work than non-users, and are absent more often.



## NO specific legislation around discouraging pregnant mums from consuming

- The US *National Survey on Drug Use and Health* found that 28% of women living in low-income areas tested positive for marijuana use during pregnancy. Up to 60% of these young women continue marijuana use throughout pregnancy due to a decreased perception of risk and stigma.



## Prevention, Education, Drug-Free

- ‘prevention’ is used in the context of preventing **harm from use** (s21) or **over-consumption** (s202)
- ‘Education’ is mentioned only in the context of addressing **harmful cannabis use** (s21), and to **promote responsible use** (s12)
- The concept of Drug Free is ignored (despite our goal of SmokeFree 2025)



**VOTE NO – SayNopeToDope.nz**