John Donovan

1100 Folly Road

Warrington, PA 18976 May 31, 2019

Governor Tom Wolf

225 Capitol Building

Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

I am writing this letter due to the overwhelming attention surrounding the legalization of marijuana throughout the United States and especially in Pennsylvania. Since 1937, there has been a negative connotation about the use of marijuana. For many years, it has been considered a smart move for politicians to oppose the legalization of marijuana, regardless of their own personal stance. Today, many voters recognize that our prohibition laws don’t do anything to reduce drug use but they do create a black market where cartels and gangs use violence to protect their profits. Based on evidence from numerous research studies, it is apparent that the legalization of marijuana for recreational use would have significant positive impacts on the businesses, citizens, and the government of Pennsylvania.

States should always be looking for opportunities to bring business to the state. The marijuana industry is one that has the potential to create a substantial amount of revenue and profits for many businesses. The legalization of marijuana has had a major impact on the economy of Colorado. According to the Colorado Department of Revenue, regulated marijuana sales in calendar 2018 were nearly $1.55 billion, up about 3 percent from just over $1.5 billion in 2017. The state has seen its marijuana industry sales more than double since 2014 when the first year of adult-use pot generated $683.5 million. Imagine how that could help the economy of Pennsylvania.

Establishing more businesses in Pennsylvania can also lead to an improvement in the employment situation for our citizens. New Frontier Data, a data analytics firm focused on the cannabis industry, analyzed that there could be nearly 1.1 million job openings created from now until the year 2025 from the full legalization of Marijuana. Also, the Marijuana Policy Group states that after the complete legalization in the State of Colorado, the cannabis created 18,000 full time jobs within 10 months. Even though we are at a near record low unemployment rate, having additional industries in Pennsylvania can help to improve that number even further.

Not only will businesses and citizens see benefits from the legalization of recreational marijuana, it can also have a major impact on our government’s potential to generate revenue. Jeff Sessions, a medical marijuana researcher, estimated that the current size of the marijuana market nationally could generate over $132 billion per year in tax revenue. That would certainly have a positive impact on Pennsylvania’s revenue and our ability to pay for much needed services within the state.

After seeing the potential from the states that have already legalized marijuana for recreational purposes, it should obvious that the state of Pennsylvania should follow their lead. The incentive to make profits will bring additional business to the state, help provide for the common good through the creation of jobs and provide funds for the government which can be used in a number of ways. Based on the benefits it will provide to the citizens of the state, I urge you to extend the legalization of marijuana to use for recreational purposes.

Sincerely,

John Donovan

Central Bucks High School South