

# THE **NORML** NEWS

*your National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws*

## **"YOU ARE GOING DIRECTLY TO JAIL" New NORML Report Takes Aim At "Zero Tolerance" Drugged Driving Laws. Says Approach Is Not Based On Science, But On "Convenience"**

### **Charges That Many State Laws Falsely Define Sober Drivers As "Intoxicated"**

Washington, DC: So-called zero tolerance drugged driving laws, which classify motorists who test positive for trace amounts of illicit drugs or drug metabolites (non-psychoactive compounds produced from the chemical changes of a drug in the body) in their bodily fluids (blood, saliva, and/or urine) as criminally impaired, do not promote public safety and improperly define many sober drivers as "under the influence," concludes a comprehensive report issued today by the NORML Foundation.

The report, entitled "You Are Going Directly to Jail -- DUID Legislation: What It Means, Who's Behind It, and Strategies to Prevent It," is a detailed examination of statewide "drugged driving" laws and the quantitative role

**<continued on page 3 >**

### **NORML 2005 Conference Draws Near Record Crowd**

San Francisco, CA: An overflow crowd of more than 500 marijuana-law reformers jammed the halls of San Francisco's Cathedral Hill Hotel to attend last week's 2005 national NORML Conference and call for an end to America's criminal pot laws.

News stories on the NORML conference were featured prominently in numerous local media outlets, including The San Francisco Chronicle, The Oakland Tribune, KQED radio, The Orange County Register, KGO talk radio, The Tri-Valley Herald, and The Eureka Times-Standard, among others.

2005 NORML award recipients included: Michael Aldrich, recipient of NORML's Lifetime Achievement Award; Dale Gieringer, recipient of the Lester Grinspoon Award (for Outstanding Achievement in the

**<continued on page 3 >**

### **Cannabis Users Likely To Be Well Educated, Top Wage Earners, Survey Says**

Ottawa, Ontario: Lifetime cannabis users are likely to be single, well educated, and earning an above average salary, according to a recent survey of 13,900 Canadians conducted by Health Canada and the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions.

Approximately 45 percent of the Canadian population over age 15 reported having used cannabis during their lifetime - up from 23 percent in 1989, the survey reported. Lifetime cannabis use increased with education and income. Among those with some post-secondary education, 52 percent reported having used cannabis. By comparison, among those without a high school degree, only 35 percent reported having tried cannabis. In addition, 55 percent of those

**<continued on page 4 >**

**The NORML Monthly Newsletter is an all-volunteer effort to broadcast news, announcements and information about and for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws.**

It is composed of the weekly NORML e-Zine available online at:  
[http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=3442](http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=3442)

For content issues contact:

**National NORML**  
1001 Connecticut Ave NW, #1010,  
Washington, DC, 20009

**(202) 483-5500**  
or visit their site at

**[www.norml.org](http://www.norml.org)**

The NORML News Report is produced by the Librarians of OpdxNwoL - the Olde pdxNORML Website and Online Library for NORML Members, Affiliates and Interested Parties.

**To get printed copies or help setting up your own contact them.**

*E-mail:*  
[librarian@pdxnorml.org](mailto:librarian@pdxnorml.org)

*Check 'em out! Visit and download from:*

**[pdxnorml.org/news/NL](http://pdxnorml.org/news/NL)**

## A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly.

During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

Today NORML continues to lead the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. NORML serves as an informational resource to the national media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the anti-marijuana propaganda from the government; lobbies state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publishes a regular newsletter; hosts, along with the NORML Foundation, an informative web site and an annual conference; and serves as the umbrella group for a national network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Their sister organization, the NORML Foundation sponsors public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provides legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and undertakes relevant research.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local NORML Chapters across the country. Check 'em out!

**NORML's mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.**

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use.

NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for medical or personal purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. NORML also supports the legalization of hemp (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit their website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from DRUGGED DRIVING, page 1 > of cannabis consumption in on-road traffic accidents.

"Zero tolerance per se laws have little to do with promoting public safety or identifying motorists who drive while impaired," the report states. "Rather, the enactment and enforcement of zero tolerance DUID (driving under the influence of drugs) legislation improperly defines many sober drivers as 'intoxicated' solely because they were found to have consumed a controlled substance - particularly marijuana - at some previous, unspecified point in time."

It continues: "This approach is not based on science but on convenience. Zero tolerance per se laws define a new, driving-related offense that is divorced from impairment. In their strictest form, any driver who tests positive for any trace amount of an illicit drug or drug metabolite (i.e., compounds produced from chemical changes of a drug in the body, but not necessarily psychoactive themselves), is guilty per se of the crime of 'drugged driving,' even if the defendant was sober.

"In the case of marijuana, these laws are particularly troublesome. THC, marijuana's main psychoactive constituent, may be detected at low levels in the blood of heavy cannabis users for 1-2 days after past use. Marijuana's primary metabolite THC-COOH, the most common indicator of marijuana use in workplace drug tests, is detectable in urine for days and sometimes weeks after past use - long after any psychoactive effects have ceased.

Consequently, under 'zero tolerance' per se laws, a person who smoked a joint on Monday could conceivably be arrested the following Friday and charged with 'drugged driving,' even though he or she is no longer impaired or intoxicated."

To date, eleven states have enacted zero tolerance per se laws for controlled substances: Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin. Of these, Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, and Utah forbid drivers from operating a motor vehicle with any

detectable level of a controlled substance or its metabolites in one's bodily fluids. Similar laws are pending in additional states.

Regarding cannabis' potential impairment of psychomotor skills, the report finds: "While it is well established that alcohol increases accident risk, evidence of marijuana's culpability in on-road driving accidents is less understood. Although marijuana intoxication has been shown to mildly impair psychomotor skills, this impairment does not appear to be severe or long lasting. In driving simulator tests, this impairment is typically manifested by subjects decreasing their driving speed and requiring greater time to respond to emergency situations.

"This impairment does not appear to play a significant role in on-road traffic accidents when THC levels in a driver's blood are low and/or THC is not consumed in combination with alcohol. ... [F]rom the available research, it is apparent that cannabis' adverse on-road impact is hardly so great as to warrant the passage and enforcement of zero tolerance per se DUID legislation, which would unavoidably classify many sober cannabis users as 'impaired' and threaten them with criminal prosecution."

Commenting on the report, NORML Director Allen St. Pierre said: "We all support the goal of keeping impaired drivers off the road, regardless of whether the driver is impaired from alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs. However, these zero tolerance laws are neither a safe nor sensible way to identify impaired drivers; they are a cynical attempt to misuse the traffic safety laws in order to identify and prosecute marijuana smokers per se. They should be opposed by citizens and lawmakers alike."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Senior Policy Analyst, at (202) 483-5500. HTML versions of the report are available at:

[http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=6492](http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6492)

PDF versions of the report are available at:

[http://www.norml.org/pdf\\_files/NORML\\_You\\_Are\\_Going\\_Directly\\_To\\_Jail.pdf](http://www.norml.org/pdf_files/NORML_You_Are_Going_Directly_To_Jail.pdf)

<continued from NORML CONF, page 1 > Field of Marijuana Law Reform); Rick Steves, recipient of the Hunter S. Thompson/NORML Media Award; Angel McClary-Raich, Diane Monson, Gary Storck, and Jackie Rickert, recipients of the Peter McWilliams Award (for Outstanding Achievement in Advancing the Cause of Medical Marijuana); Debby Goldsberry, recipient of the Pauline Sabin Award (in Honor and Recognition for the Crucial Need and Importance of Women's Leadership in Ending Marijuana Prohibition); Steven Epstein, recipient of NORML's Outstanding Cannabis Advocate Award; and Chris Mulligan, recipient of NORML's Student Activism Award.

Photos and highlights from the 2005 NORML conference will be available shortly on the NORML web site at: <http://www.norml.org>

<continued from WAGE EARNERS, page 1 > respondents with a "high income adequacy" said they had used cannabis, as opposed to only 43 percent of those with a "low income adequacy." Among those who reported consuming cannabis, most said that they used it infrequently and did not "experience[e] serious harm due to their cannabis use."

For more information, please contact either Allen St. Pierre or Paul Armentano of NORML at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the survey is available from the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions website at:

<http://www.ccsa.ca/pdf/ccsa-004028-2005.pdf>

## **Cannabinoids Offer Novel Approach For Treatment Of Prostate Cancer, Study Says**

Madison, WI: The administration of synthetic cannabinoids inhibits malignant cell growth in human prostate cells in vitro in a dose-dependent and time-dependent manner, according to clinical trial data published in the March issue of the journal Cancer Research.

Researchers at University of Wisconsin's

Department of Dermatology reported that the administration of the cannabis receptor agonist WIN-55,212-2 inhibited cell growth in certain human prostate cells, and also induced apoptosis (programmed cell death). Administration of a cannabis receptor antagonist prevented these effects.

"Our results suggest that ... cannabinoid receptor agonists (a drug or chemical that combines with a receptor to produce a physiological reaction typical of a naturally occurring substance) could be developed as novel therapeutic agents for the treatment of prostate cancer," authors concluded. Previous trials have found cannabinoids to induce tumor regression in rodents and in human cells, including the inhibition of lung carcinoma, glioma (brain tumors), lymphoma/leukemia, skin carcinoma, and breast cancer.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Senior Policy Analyst, at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Cannabinoid receptor as a novel target for the treatment of prostate cancer," appears in the March 1 issue of Cancer Research.

## **No Causal Link Between Cannabis Use And Schizophrenia, Study Says**

Honolulu, HI: Behavior suggestive of schizophrenia generally precedes the onset of cannabis use, according to survey data published in the current issue of the journal Psychiatry Research.

One-hundred and eighty-nine volunteers responded to an anonymous questionnaire inquiring about cannabis use and schizotypal traits (behavior suggestive of schizophrenia but not of sufficient severity to warrant a diagnosis of schizophrenia). Among recent cannabis users, average age of schizotypal symptoms significantly preceded age of first use of cannabis. When cases were analyzed individually, authors affirmed that the majority

<continued on next page>

<continued from previous page> of respondents in the "Recently Used" group reported schizotypal personality disorder (SPD) symptoms prior to their initiation of cannabis use.

"Although researchers recognize an association between cannabis use and psychosis, whether or not cannabis contributes to the development of psychosis remains less clear," authors wrote. "The current study ... suggest[s] a temporal precedence of schizotypal traits before cannabis use in most cases. These findings do not support a causal link between cannabis use and schizotypal traits."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano or Allen St. Pierre of NORML at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Symptoms of schizotypy precede cannabis use," appears in the March issue of Psychiatry Research.

## Heavy Cannabis Use Not Associated With Cognitive Deficits, Study Says

Belmont, MA: Heavy, long-term use of cannabis appears to have a negligible impact on cognition and memory, according to clinical trial data published in the current issue of the American Journal of Addictions.

Researchers at Harvard Medical School performed magnetic resonance imaging on the brains of 22 long-term cannabis users (reporting a mean of 20,100 lifetime episodes of smoking) and 26 controls (subjects with no history of cannabis use). Imaging displayed "no significant differences" between heavy cannabis smokers compared to controls.

"These findings are consistent with recent literature suggesting that cannabis use is not associated with structural changes within the brain as a whole or the hippocampus in particular," authors concluded.

For more information, please contact either Paul Armentano or Allen St. Pierre of NORML at

(202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Lack of hippocampal volume change in long-term heavy cannabis users," appears in the January-February issue of the American Journal of Addictions. Synopses of previous clinical trials on cannabis use and cognitive function are available at:

[http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=6434](http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6434)

## Trial Set "Inhaled" Marinol And Migraine

**Miami, FL:** A newly formulated version of Marinol (synthetic THC) that may be administered via an inhaler rather than orally will be tested as a treatment for severe migraine headaches, Solvay Pharmaceuticals announced at last week's American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Annual Meeting in Miami.

Marinol, an FDA-approved Schedule III drug, is consumed orally in pill form by patients suffering from HIV/AIDS and/or undergoing chemotherapy. However, Marinol's therapeutic effects may be delayed by as much as 1-2 hours following consumption because the drug is slowly metabolized by the liver, which converts it into various highly psychoactive chemical compounds.

In a recent clinical trial, patients administered a new formulation of Marinol by a pressurized metered dose inhaler gained rapid systemic absorption from the drug. Solvay intends to test the efficacy, safety, and tolerability of inhaled Marinol for migraine in a placebo-controlled trial later this year, the company announced.

"Pulmonary Dronabinol (Marinol) has potential application in a variety of conditions, such as the treatment of migraines, nausea, pain management and spasticity ... and could offer an alternative for patients when a fast onset of action is desirable," the company said in a press release.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Senior Policy Analyst, at (202) 483-5500.

## Federal Bill Mandating 10 Years To Life For Pot Sales Reintroduced In Congress

**Washington, DC:** House Judiciary Chair F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) has reintroduced legislation in Congress that seeks to impose mandatory minimum sentences on defendants who furnish a controlled substance, including marijuana, to any individual under 18 years of age or who has previously been enrolled in a drug treatment program. The bill, H.R. 1528, was approved last week by the House Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, and is now pending before the full Committee.

Under H.R. 1528, any person age 21 or over who attempts or conspires to offer marijuana to someone younger than 18 years old shall face a mandatory sentence of 10 years in prison. The mandatory penalty for a subsequent violation of the statute is life in prison.

Defendants found to have distributed marijuana near a drug treatment facility, or who have offered it to someone who is currently or has previously been enrolled in drug treatment, would receive a mandatory prison sentence of five years to life under the proposal.

Sensenbrenner's bill also seeks to impose mandatory minimum sentences on defendants who have manufactured or distributed marijuana near various public and private establishments, including libraries, daycare centers, and video arcades, as well as impose life imprisonment upon individuals convicted of their third drug felony.

NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre called Sensenbrenner's proposal "draconian," stating that it would shift sentencing discretion away from courts to prosecutors and would sharply increase the number of non-violent offenders in prison.

*For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre of NORML at (202) 483-5500. Additional information on H.R. 1528 is available on NORML's website at:*  
<http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=7419321>

## Canada Approves First Ever Medical Cannabis Spray; *Sativex-Maker Hires Former Drug Czar Deputy Director*

**Salisbury, United Kingdom:** Health Canada granted regulatory approval this week to Sativex, an oral spray consisting of natural cannabis extracts, for the treatment of neuropathic pain associated with Multiple Sclerosis. The spray is expected to be available to the Canadian public by prescription later this spring.

Produced by the British biotechnology firm GW Pharmaceuticals, Sativex is a whole plant medicinal cannabis extract containing precise doses of the cannabinoids THC and cannabidiol (CBD), as well as naturally existing terpenoids (oils) and flavonoids (antioxidants). In clinical trials, Sativex has been demonstrated to alleviate numerous MS-associated symptoms compared to placebo, including pain, muscle spasms, and bladder incontinence.

"This event marks the world's first approval of a [natural] cannabis-derived medicine," said GW Pharmaceuticals Executive Chairman Geoffrey Guy. The company, along with its partner Bayer AG, is expected to begin negotiations with the Food and Drug Administration later this year regarding opportunities to bring Sativex to the US market.

GW is expected to seek further approval from Health Canada to market Sativex for additional therapeutic indications. Recent clinical trials on Sativex found that it significantly reduced pain in cancer patients compared to placebo, and relieved urinary dysfunction in patients suffering from advanced Multiple Sclerosis.

Although regulatory approval for Sativex in the United Kingdom remains pending, an advisory body of the British Medicines and Health products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) announced in December that it required further clinical evidence of Sativex's ability to alleviate MS-associated spasticity in a "clinically relevant" manner before the agency would consider approving the drug for licensing in the UK.

GW Pharmaceuticals also announced this week that it had hired former White House Drug Czar Deputy Director Andrea Barthwell in an advisory capacity. As Deputy Director, Barthwell lobbied against legislative efforts to legalize the medical use of whole smoked cannabis by qualified patients. "Having this product (Sativex) available will certainly slow down the dash to make the crude plant material available to patients across the country," Barthwell told the *Los Angeles Times* Wednesday.

Responding to Barthwell's statement, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre, said, "We are pleased that Sativex may one day offer a legal option for US patients and physicians. However, patients who choose to use whole smoked cannabis therapeutically under their doctor's supervision should not have to live in fear of arrest or incarceration for using their chosen medication."

*For more information, please contact either Allen St. Pierre or Paul Armentano of NORML at (202) 483-5500.*

## **Cannabis Use Not Associated With Injury Among Trauma Patients, Study Says**

Louisville, KY: Use of cannabis is not independently associated with injuries requiring hospitalization, according to clinical data published in the March issue of the *Journal of TRAUMA Injury, Infection, and Critical Care*.

A research team at SUNY (State University of New York) Buffalo's Department of Family Medicine conducted a logistical retrogression analysis of approximately 900 trauma patients with positive toxicology screens for drugs and alcohol. Authors found, "Alcohol and cocaine use is independently associated with violence-related injuries, whereas opiate use is independently associated with nonviolent injuries and burns. ... Associations of positive toxicology test results for ... cannabis ... with injury type, injury mechanisms, and outcomes were not statistically significant."

NORML Senior Policy Analyst Paul Armentano said that the findings countered allegations

from the Drug Czar's office that cannabis use is a leading "factor in emergency room visits."

Armentano said: "Among trauma patients requiring hospitalization, cannabis is rarely mentioned independent of other drugs. More importantly, cannabis use alone is not associated with the sort of serious or violent injuries that are typically correlated with the use of alcohol and cocaine - two substances that, unlike marijuana, often increase aggressive or risk-taking behavior among users."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano of NORML at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the study, "Toxicology Screening Results: Injury Associations Among Hospitalized Trauma Patients," appears in the March issue of the *Journal of TRAUMA Injury, Infection, and Critical Care*.

## **ACLU Joins Suit Alleging Feds Obstruct Medicinal Cannabis Research**

Washington, DC: The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has joined a legal challenge to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) alleging that the agency "obstruct[s] private research that could lead to marijuana being approved as a prescription medicine."

The ACLU filed the case on behalf of Lyle Craker, director of the UMass (University of Massachusetts)-Amherst Medicinal Plant Program, who requested federal permission in 2001 to provide scientists with an alternative, independent source of medical-grade cannabis for FDA-approved research. Presently, all federally approved research on marijuana must utilize cannabis grown and supplied by the US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). However, in recent years a growing number of US scientists have complained that the low quality of NIDA-grown marijuana is insufficient for use in clinical trials evaluating cannabis' therapeutic potential. NIDA has also refused to provide cannabis for certain FDA-approved protocols, including research on cannabis vaporization. <continued next page>



From your National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

<continued from previous page> The DEA rejected Craker's application in December 2004, stating that the establishment of a cannabis production facility "would not be consistent with public interest" because marijuana is "the most heavily abused of all Schedule I controlled substances," and that NIDA's crop was of "sufficient quality" to meet researchers' present needs. The agency further noted that it discouraged research investigating the medical utility of smoked cannabis, stating, "Smoked marijuana ... ultimately cannot be the permitted delivery system for any potential marijuana medication due to the deleterious effects and the difficulty monitoring the efficaciousness of smoked marijuana."

The ACLU's suit states that the federal government has a monopoly on supplying cannabis for research purposes, while all other controlled substances - including heroin, cocaine, MDMA (Ecstasy), and LSD - are purchased by scientists or sponsors from DEA-licensed private laboratories.

The suit further charges that NIDA-grown cannabis is of insufficient quality and potency, and that the DEA's denial of the UMass protocol to provide an alternative source of research-grade cannabis obstructs scientists ability to conduct the research necessary to develop marijuana as a legal prescription medicine.

"While NIDA is legally allowed to provide marijuana for research, it is not able to provide marijuana on a prescription basis," says Rick Doblin, NORML board member and Executive Director of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), which seeks to fund the UMass project. "This creates a situation whereby sponsors of research on medicinal cannabis are forced to conduct clinical trails with a product that they cannot be assured would be available for prescription use, potentially invalidating their research."

A hearing on the matter before a federal administrative law judge is scheduled for later this summer, the ACLU stated in a press release. For more information, please contact either Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or MAPS Executive Director Rick Doblin at (617) 484-8711.

## US Inmate Population Surpasses 2.1 Million

Washington, DC: There are now more than 2.1 million Americans incarcerated in state and federal prisons and local jails, according to a report released this week by the US Department of Justice. The figure is the highest ever recorded in the history of the United States, and represents a one-quarter increase in the US inmate population since 1995. Prisoners in the custody of the 50 states and the federal system accounted for two-thirds of the incarcerated population (1.4 million inmates), while the other third were held in local jails (714,000 inmates).

Among black males age 25 to 29, approximately 13 percent were in prison or in jail, compared to less than 2 percent of white males in their late twenties. Overall, one in every 138 US residents is in prison or jail, the report concluded.

Authors of the report cited mandatory drug sentences as one of the primary reasons for the sharp increase in the US inmate population over the past decade.

For more information, please contact either Allen St. Pierre or Paul Armentano of NORML at (202) 483-5500. Full text of the Department of Justice report, "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2004," is available online at:

<http://www.csdp.org/research/pjim04.pdf>