Marijuana in California: The player politics and policy issues.

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All eyes on California

• One of the world’s largest economies
• Quasi-legal marijuana for 19 years
• Tourism
• Hemp production
• Future exports
• Heavy lift and big responsibility
Today’s talk

• Where are we now?
• Who are the players?
• What are the policy considerations?
Two decades of “legal” marijuana

- Prop. 215 passed in 1996
- No state level regulation
- Open list of conditions
- Patchwork of regulation: feast or famine
- No protections for medical marijuana patients
- Same banking issues as legal states
- Feds not obeying their own rules
- Cultivation: don’t ask don’t tell
- Impact on youth use and crime? Both down since 1996.
The cast of characters…AFD

• Marijuana reform groups (MPP, CCPR, CANORML)
• Social justice reform groups (DPA, ACLU, NAACP)
• Medical Marijuana advocates (ASA, GLACA)
• Academic and research interests (BRC, CSAM, RAND)
• Politicians (Gavin, Kamala, Diane, Jerry)
• Special interest groups (Enviro, labor, parents)
• The marijuana and hemp industry (CCIA, HIA)
• The opposition (SAM, law enforcement, many treatment folks, some Republicans)
• The Faith community
Policy Considerations

- Home grow
- Regulation of edibles
- Licensing structure for cultivation
- Priority licensing for dispensaries
- Barriers to entry for the industry
- Tax structure
- How to handle medical marijuana
- DUI and workplace drug testing
- Labor considerations
- Environmental impact
- Revenue allocation
What will help/hurt us

HELP

• A unified voice in terms of policy demands
• A willingness to compromise
• An understanding of the difference between “right” and “winnable”
• Keeping the big picture in mind: stop the bleeding and begin to stitch the wound caused by marijuana prohibition.

HURT

• Presenting as a base of chaotic support
• Big money from opposition
• Multiple ballot measures
• Getting bogged down in details
No matter how light the punishment…

- 2010-2013: African Americans make up 7% of CA population but 23% of those arrested for marijuana felonies.
- African Americans more likely to be charged with possession with intent, which can carry a stiffer penalty and is largely subjective.
- Infractions still administered in a racially biased way
  - Fresno: 974 infractions in 2012. African Americans 21% (8% of pop); whites 19% (30% of pop)
  - Los Angeles: 2,459 infractions in 2012. African Americans 25% (<10% pop); whites 21% (33% pop).
Questions?

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Thank you!