RESOLUTION OF THE EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 25-1-508(5)(a), C.R.S., the El Paso County Board of Health (Board of Health) has the power and duty to develop and promote public policies needed to secure conditions necessary for a healthy community within El Paso County, Colorado; and,

WHEREAS, marijuana is not a benign substance and its use places a strain on our healthcare system, and poses considerable danger to the health and safety of users, their families, and communities; and,

WHEREAS, marijuana smoke is an irritant to the lungs and frequent marijuana smokers have many of the same respiratory issues experienced by tobacco smokers and smoking marijuana has been associated with increased work absences, tardiness, accidents, workers' compensation claims, and job turnover; and,

WHEREAS, marijuana use is associated with a higher likelihood of dropping out of school and use in adolescence has revealed a deficit in connections between areas of the brain responsible for learning and memory; and heavy or chronic marijuana use is associated with cognitive impairments and with structural and functional brain changes in the human brain including potential loss of IQ; and there is a strong association between chronic marijuana use and mental illness, including depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, addiction and personality disturbances; and heavy marijuana users generally report lower life satisfaction, poorer mental and physical health, relationship problems, and less academic and career success compared to their peers from similar backgrounds; and,

WHEREAS, marijuana use compromises judgment, which may lead to engaging in risky behavior and experiencing negative consequences such as high-risk sexual behaviors, driving while impaired or riding with a driver who is impaired; and because marijuana use seriously impairs judgment and motor coordination it has been increasingly associated with driving fatalities in Colorado; and,

WHEREAS, legalizing drugs increases their availability and acceptability and likely will lead to increased consumption, which in turn would likely lead to higher public health and financial costs for society; and,

WHEREAS, the American Psychiatric Association has concluded that current evidence supports, at minimum, a strong association of marijuana use with the onset of psychiatric disorders; and,
WHEREAS, the delegates at the 2013 Interim Meeting of the American Medical Association House of Delegates voted to pass a resolution on marijuana explicitly opposing marijuana legalization with the report reading in part that (1) marijuana is a dangerous drug and as such it is a public health concern and (2) sale and possession of marijuana should not be legalized; and,

WHEREAS, on November 6, 2012, Colorado voters passed Amendment 64 to the Constitution of the State of Colorado, enacted as Article XVIII, Section 16, relating to Personal Use and Regulation of Marijuana; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with Article XVIII, Section 16 (5)(f), any locality within Colorado, including counties and municipalities, may prohibit the operation of marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities, or retail marijuana stores through the enactment of an ordinance or through an initiated or referred measure; provided, any initiated or referred measure to prohibit the operation of marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities, or retail marijuana stores must appear on a general election ballot during an even numbered year; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Health has determined that it is appropriate to advise El Paso County, and the municipalities within El Paso County, of the dangers of non-medical use of marijuana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH:

1. That the Board of Health hereby finds that the non-medical use of marijuana is detrimental to public health; and,

2. That the Board of Health encourages the governing boards of El Paso County, and municipalities within El Paso County, to discourage the non-medical use of marijuana by people within El Paso County based on its detriment to public health and,

3. That the Board of Health authorizes each of its individual members, and the Public Health Director of El Paso County Public Health, to advocate in opposition to the non-medical use of marijuana within El Paso County based on its detriment to public health.

MOVED, SECONDED AND ADOPTED BY THE EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AT ITS REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 27, 2014.

EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

BY: ____________________________ ATTEST: ____________________________
President

Secretary
Citations


23 Richer I and Bergeron J, Driving under the influence of cannabis: Links with dangerous driving.

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