

**Title:** Changing the Focus from using Marijuana from a Medical to a Legal Issue

**Introduced by:** Annette Mercatante, MD, for the St. Clair County Delegation

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**Referred to:** Reference Committee B

**House Action:**

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Whereas, marijuana is the most popular illicit drug in use in America with 39.8 percent of the U.S. population having tried marijuana at least once, with no documented risk of death or overdose due to acute toxicity, and

Whereas, marijuana use can pre-dispose people for substance abuse later in life, affects many skills required for safe driving, is associated with poor school outcomes, unprotected intercourse, and other mental health disorders, yet does have limited evidence to support therapeutic effects in the medical arena, and

Whereas, Michigan’s Medical Marihuana Program (MMMP) appears to reflect a sentiment by many in the state that assistance should be provided to those truly suffering, yet the reality is that many people are obtaining medical marijuana certificates for bogus, poorly documented reasons that ridicule the legitimacy of true therapeutic interventions and place physicians in the position of being the “marijuana use gatekeepers,” with over 105,000 original and renewal applications received since April 6, 2009, denying only those whose applications are “incomplete or missing documentation,” and

Whereas, the potential tax revenue for legally purchasing marijuana for recreational or self-therapeutic use is estimated to range from 2.5 to 9.1 billion dollars, and

Whereas, the current use of “medical marijuana” certification creates tacit approval of marijuana use by the medical community and may result in increased consumption particularly in our adolescents; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Michigan Delegation to the AMA ask the AMA to advocate that the consumption of marijuana be legalized within the same framework as other drugs deemed to be low risk or toxicity (alcohol and tobacco) and taxed accordingly, thus removing the role of a licensed practitioner to be the implicit gatekeeper for marijuana consumption.<sup>i</sup>

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**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE**

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References:

1. American Journal of Economics and Sociology. October 1994, 53 (4): 475-490.
2. Journal of Adolescent Health. July 2005, 37 (1): 75
3. Michigan Department of Community Health