



## California Police Chiefs Association

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RE: Medical Marijuana in California

Dear Chief of Police:

Proposition 215, California's Medical Marijuana Initiative, passed in November of 1996, has had ample time to demonstrate its value. Marijuana use by healthy youth and adults is at epidemic levels in California. Anecdotal observation is that the vast majority of medical marijuana users in California are young, healthy and simply enjoy using marijuana.

One of the claims supporting passage of the ballot initiative was that marijuana would be used by cancer and glaucoma patients who found that nothing but marijuana would give them relief. Experience shows that very few of those participating in medical marijuana fit this seriously, chronically ill category. Frequently officers contact parolees, probationers and gang members in possession of both marijuana and marijuana recommendations. Virtually anyone in California can obtain a physician's recommendation to use marijuana.

California's medical marijuana ballot initiative called for personal growth and possession of marijuana or the use of a caregiver for that purpose. However, the result has been a large number of marijuana dispensaries opening throughout California. These dispensaries are magnets for crime. Marijuana currently sells for around \$5,000 per pound at the retail level.

Due to the relatively low costs associated with the production of marijuana, this value promotes the involvement of organized criminal enterprises in order to meet the demands in California. We have seen tremendous increases in both outdoor and indoor marijuana grow operations. These clandestine operations are dangerous for individuals, the community and law enforcement. Environmental damage is significant and the workers are often forced into working the grow at peril of their lives.

Based on the almost 12 years of medical marijuana experience in the state of California it is our observation that it has been destructive to our communities. Passage of any form of medical marijuana anywhere in our nation is bad public policy.

A great deal of information has been compiled regarding this issue and can be made available to you via our California Police Chiefs Association Executive Director, Leslie McGill. Our association also drafted a White Paper on Marijuana Dispensaries in April of 2009 and Leslie would be happy to send you a copy. I wish you success in your efforts to protect and serve the people of your state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bernard K. Melekian".

Bernard K. Melekian  
President