

New Cash Crop

There is a misguided trend growing across the country; marijuana. The legalization of marijuana under the guise of health care by using the misnomer “medical-marijuana” is a disaster for America.

Marijuana is a weed perhaps an herb. It is not a regulated drug or substance. There is no government agency regulating anything about the safety, use, or quality of marijuana. Tomatoes have more scrutiny on a local, state or federal level. Yet because proponents have cleverly tied the term medical to its use people actually believe it could be good for you.

The only legal use for this drug is to alleviate pain and distress from fatal illnesses. The same drug can be prescribed in a pill. Now where is the benefit?

How many millions of dollars have been spent to rid the country of smoking tobacco? How many lives have been lost? How many children have been born with defects from tobacco? How many people have suffered with chronic health care from tobacco?

Many people talk about this being a new cash crop and tax base. Maryland had a three hundred year history of growing tobacco. The state joined a law suit against the tobacco industry and paid farmers not to grow a crop that was the mainstay of a large portion of the farming industry. An industry so important that a civil war was fought to preserve the way tobacco farming, plantations existed.

Marijuana will not be any different only worse.

Will we fight for places to smoke marijuana after we outlawed smoking tobacco in almost every public place imaginable? If that is done, then all the antismoking laws will be rolled back. There will be no legal justification for them to be enforced.

Winning the argument for public health verses tobacco was a great achievement. We cannot erode that success by turning a blind eye to marijuana. The time to educate the public is now. Marijuana needs to be discussed in the same terms as tobacco. Equating it to alcohol is a moral argument. We need to keep it a medical argument.