

## Marijuana Legal Status

Marijuana is a Schedule I controlled substance under Idaho Law, under which the use and sale for any purpose is illegal. In the last two decades, several states have moved toward medical marijuana legalization (MML) and recreational marijuana legalization (RML).

## Revenue vs. Reality

The potential economic benefit of increased tax revenue is the top argument among those who support RML.<sup>1</sup>

**Belief** – In 2012, 55% of voting Coloradans supported the legalization of recreational marijuana. Polls showed that of those who supported the initiative, the potential tax revenue was considered the greatest benefit of legalization.<sup>2</sup> New Approach Washington, which lead Washington’s 2012 legalization campaign, argued financial benefits among the top reasons to support RML.

**Reality** – In 2018, Colorado collected \$267 million and Washington collected \$439 million in marijuana tax revenue, or roughly 0.5% of state and local general revenue in each state.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, for every dollar gained in tax revenue, Coloradans spent approximately \$4.50 to mitigate the effects of legalization.<sup>4</sup>

Four other states reported a full year’s worth of state marijuana tax revenue in 2018: Alaska (\$15 million), California (\$354 million), Nevada (\$87 million), and Oregon (\$94, million). All of these totals were less than 1% of state and local general revenue.<sup>4</sup>

# \$4.50

The cost for each dollar brought in by marijuana tax revenue in Colorado.

Centennial Institute, 2019

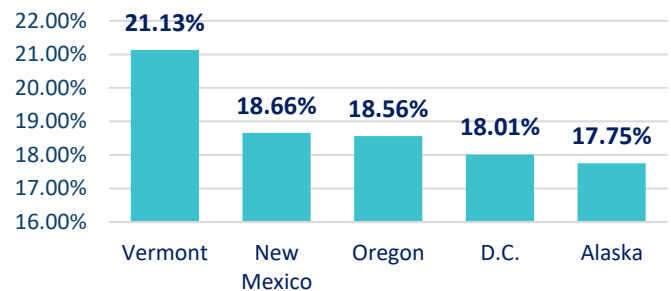
## Increased Youth Use

Across the US, the top ten states with the highest rate of current marijuana youth use were all MML states, whereas the bottom ten were all non-medical-marijuana states.<sup>5</sup>

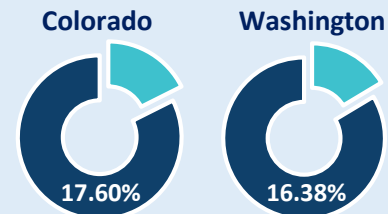
Marijuana use can have permanent effects on the developing brain. When teenagers use marijuana, the drug may impair thinking, memory, and learning functions and affect how the brain builds connections between the areas necessary for these functions. Additionally, teens who smoke marijuana report lower grades and high school completion rates and are at higher risk of mental health issues and impaired driving.<sup>6</sup> An estimated 17% of youth who use marijuana develop a cannabis use disorder.<sup>7</sup>

- Washington experienced significant increases in past-month & regular marijuana use and decreases in perceived harm from marijuana use among 8th and 10th graders after legalization.<sup>7</sup>
- Colorado youth past month marijuana use increased 12% in the 3 years after RML in 2012. Colorado youth past month marijuana use for 2014-2015 was 55% higher than the national average.<sup>7</sup>

States with Highest Rates of Past Year Youth (Aged 12-17) Marijuana Use in 2019<sup>8</sup>



Past Year Youth (Aged 12-17) Marijuana Use<sup>8</sup>



Between 2012-2018, the total number of Idahoans using marijuana in the past 30 days increased by 55%.<sup>8</sup> Nearly 1 in 3 Idaho 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders (31%) have used marijuana at least once in their lifetime.<sup>9</sup> However, only 12.04% of Idaho youth aged 12-17 years used marijuana in 2019 – down from 35% in 2011.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Public Perceptions of Arguments Supporting and Opposing Recreational Marijuana Legalization. 2017. Preventative Medicine.

<sup>2</sup> The Legalization of Dangerous Consumption: A Comparison of Cannabis and Gambling Policies in three U.S. States. 2017. Addiction Research & Theory.

<sup>3</sup> Are States Betting on Sin? The Murky Future of State Taxation. 2019. Tax Policy Center, Urban Institute & Brookings Institution.

<sup>4</sup> Economic and Social Costs of Legalized Marijuana. 2018. Centennial Institute.

<sup>5</sup> The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact. 2017. Rocky Mountain HIDTA.

<sup>6</sup> What You Need to Know about Marijuana Use in Teens. 2017. NCCDPHP, CDC.

<sup>7</sup> Association of State Recreational Marijuana Laws with Adolescent Marijuana Use. 2017. Jama Pediatrics.

<sup>8</sup> National Survey on Drug Use and Health. 2019. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>9</sup> Idaho Youth Risk Behavior Survey. 2019. Idaho State Department of Education.