



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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OHIO COUNTY PROSECUTORS URGE A “NO” VOTE ON ISSUE 2

Warn of Increased Burdens to Counties from More Illegal Marijuana Sales, Traffic Deaths and Injuries and Drug Abuse and Addiction

Already Over-burdened County Courts and Human Services Agencies Would Receive No Dedicated Funding from Issue 2

Unlike Municipalities and Townships, Counties Would Have No Power to Limit or Block Marijuana Operations

COLUMBUS -- Today the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the professional association for Ohio's 88 county prosecutors, urged Ohioans to oppose Issue 2 at the ballot box next Tuesday or face new burdens and costs to county governments already stretched thin. Issue 2 would provide no dedicated funding stream to county courts, prosecutors, human services or other agencies to help them deal with increases in criminal activity, traffic deaths and injuries, and abuse and addiction.

“From what we’ve seen in states that have legalized recreational marijuana, we know what Ohio would face. The human impacts are the most devastating, but there are also increased problems and costs for county governments that will impact Ohioans that we should understand. Illicit marijuana sales don’t go down, they go up, which increases work and costs for county prosecutors and courts. Fatal traffic deaths and injuries go up. Drug abuse and addiction goes up. Both of which mean more innocent victims and more ruined lives in our communities. Ohioans will be left to pick up the pieces and subsidize the impact of this industry. Issue 2 is a very bad deal for Ohio,” said Louis Tobin, Executive Director of the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association.

Increases in illicit marijuana use and sales. Research in other jurisdictions that have legalized recreational marijuana shows that illicit sales increase after legalization; they do not decline. In a report from Rutgers University’s Center for Alcohol and Substance Use Studies, California’s police confiscations of illegal marijuana have continued on a large scale since it legalized recreational

marijuana in 2016 and arrests for illegal marijuana have actually increased. Colorado, Oregon, New York, Canada and Thailand have all experienced similar increases in the sizes of their illicit markets after legalization.

Increases in fatal and injury crashes. Ohio would see 48 more fatal crashes and 2,300 more injury crashes, according to projections based on research by the insurance industry and an analysis of 2022 Ohio crash statistics conducted by the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police, the Ohio Chiefs of Police Association and the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association.

Increases in abuse and addiction-related issues. The Journal of the American Medical Association reports that approximately 30% of marijuana users suffer from addiction. With studies showing others states seeing a rise in marijuana use after legalization, especially an increase of combined marijuana and alcohol use, Ohio should expect to see increases in issues related to substance abuse and substance addiction.

“All of these problems bring increased costs to counties, but counties would receive no funding from the marijuana tax, nor would counties have the same powers as villages or townships to limit or ban new marijuana operations. Ohioans should expect to see virtually all of their county offices further burdened if Issue 2 passes, which is yet another reasons we urge Ohioans to oppose it,” said Tobin.

The Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association is an organization that represents Ohio’s 88 elected county prosecutors and nearly 2,100 assistant county prosecutors.

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