

Billi Steele

The "War on drugs" has been an ongoing issue since 1971 and has only gotten worse over the years. It is amazing how a little plant like marijuana can cause so much commotion. If the legalization of marijuana could pull us out of this recession, would you vote yes? Clearly, the proponents for legalizing marijuana have stated a better argument than their opponents because they show that marijuana has been proven to be less harmful than alcohol and tobacco, has economic benefits for major industries, and offers tax revenue that helps fund local and state programs.

Firstly, marijuana has been proven to be less harmful than alcohol and tobacco. For instance, alcohol and tobacco have been proven to cause cancer, heart failure, liver damage and more, and yet they are both legal. (procon.org, pro 9) This evidence proves that marijuana is not as harmful to the human body than alcohol and tobacco, and that more people die each year from alcohol and tobacco use than they do from marijuana use.

Secondly, proponents argue that marijuana has economic benefits for major industries, especially tourism and banking. For example, for every \$1.00 spent in the marijuana industry, between \$2.13 and \$2.40 is generated in economic activity. (procon.org, pro 1) This evidence suggests that major industries like tourism, transportation, food and banking benefit from the legalization of marijuana.

Those against the legalization of marijuana say it is just one more harmful substance that costs more than the revenue it generates in society. The Pew Research Center says, "the most frequently mentioned reason why people oppose legalization is that marijuana generally hurts society." (procon.org, con #1) However, those for the legalization of marijuana are constantly providing evidence that the tax revenue from legalized marijuana helps fund local and state programs. For instance, "From 2016 to 2017, in Colorado, \$40 million of marijuana tax revenue went to public school construction, another \$105 million went to housing programs, health programs in middle schools, and mental health programs in jails." (procon.org, pro 10)

Commented [1]: Quotation marks are needed if this is a direct quote. Also, remember to transition into your examples. Overall, excellent work on your counterargument/rebuttal.