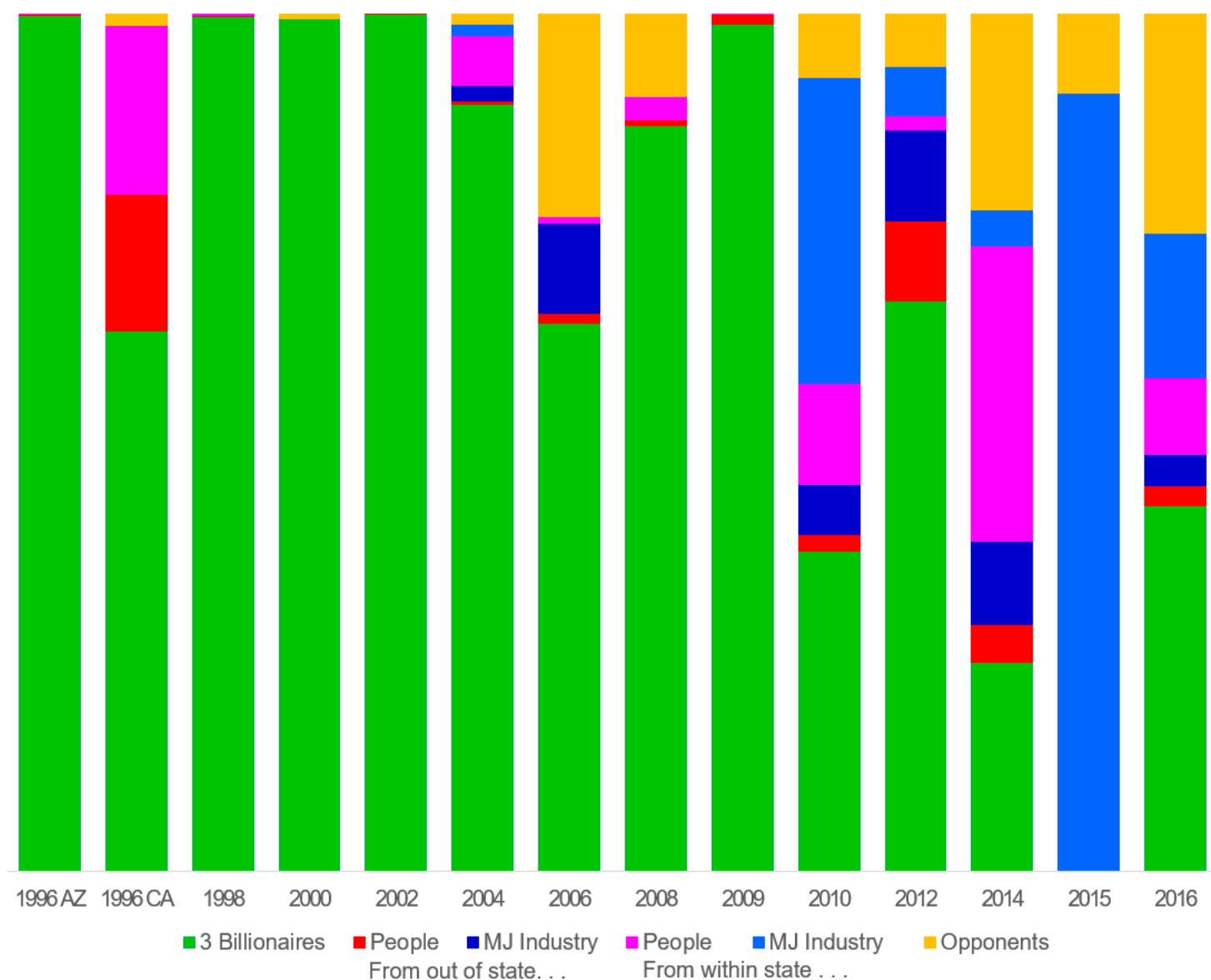


Tracking the Money That's Legalizing Marijuana And Why It Matters



National Families in Action
2017

A Note about the Numbers in This Report

Financial data in this report come from three sources. In 2000, National Families in Action tracked the 12 ballot initiatives floated to legalize marijuana for medical use between 1996 and 2000. All but one passed. Looking backward over four years meant we could only capture the financial information that was available retrospectively, and it was limited. Several years later, we tracked the two initiatives that attempted to legalize marijuana for recreational use in 2002. Both failed. Again, financial information was incomplete. What we were able to capture appears in an [archive](#) on the National Families website.

In 2004, the National Institute on Money in State Politics began collecting information on marijuana ballot initiatives. It publishes this data on a website called [Follow the Money](#). We cannot praise this financial data collection highly enough. Special thanks to Institute staff members for helping us understand how to interpret its data. Financial data in this report about marijuana ballot initiatives from 2004 to the present come from this collection. The data are complete for all years except 2016. That year's data are incomplete because some states do not require final campaign reports until many months into the new year. Our cut-off date is February 10, 2017.

A third source, which also began collecting marijuana ballot initiative data in 2004, is [Ballotpedia](#). This resource provides limited financial data but offers helpful narratives about sponsors who support and oppose these initiatives.

We place contributors who support marijuana ballot initiatives into one of several categories. The Three Billionaires category contains contributions made by George Soros and/or Peter Lewis and/or John Sperling and the marijuana legalization organizations the first two fund themselves (Soros) or through their families (Lewis, who died in 2013). Out of State and In State categories include donations from individuals and non-individuals. Out of State and In State MMJ (Medical Marijuana) industry categories include donations from individuals and non-individuals in the industry, wealthy people who made large contributions to legalization ballot initiatives in multiple states, and other billionaires who donated more than \$5 million in a single state. Those donations that cannot be identified as coming from In State or Out of State are split evenly between the two.

A Note about the Datasheets Linked to Each Table in This Report

We downloaded datasheets for each marijuana ballot initiative between 2004 and 2016 from Follow the Money as of February 10, 2017. (Those few not up to date or unavailable on Follow the Money were downloaded from Ballotpedia.) Once downloaded, we sorted the data by ballot initiative committee to separate proponents from opponents, then by state, and then by contributions from In State Individuals and Nonindividuals, and Out of State Individuals and Nonindividuals, including those involved with the marijuana industry, determined through Google searches. To the right of Follow the Money's sorted data on each datasheet we constructed our analysis (in blue type to distinguish our analysis from Follow the Money's data).

Tracking the Money That's Legalizing Marijuana And Why It Matters

Sue Rusche
President and CEO
National Families in Action

Where's the Money Coming From?

Americans seem to have been persuaded that cannabidiol (CBD), a marijuana component often called cannabis oil or Charlotte's Web, cures intractable seizures in children stricken with epilepsy. Polls show 90 percent want medical marijuana legalized, especially for these children.

But listen to Michael D. Privitera, MD, president of the American Epilepsy Society and director of the epilepsy center at the University of Cincinnati Neuroscience Institute, in a [letter](#) he wrote to a Pennsylvania legislator:

The families and children moving to Colorado are receiving unregulated, highly variable artisanal preparations of cannabis oil prescribed, in most cases, by physicians with no training in pediatrics, neurology, or epilepsy. As a result, the epilepsy specialists in Colorado have been at the bedside of children having severe dystonic reactions and other movement disorders, developmental regression, intractable vomiting and worsening seizures that can be so severe they have to put the child into a coma to get the seizures to stop.

Because these products are unregulated, it is impossible to know if these dangerous adverse reactions are due to the CBD or because of contaminants found in these artisanal preparations. The Colorado team has also seen families who have gone into significant debt, paying hundreds of dollars a month for oils that do not appear to work for the vast majority. For all these reasons, *not a single pediatric neurologist in Colorado recommends the use of artisanal cannabis preparations.*

How did we get here—states passing laws to legalize a marijuana product for epilepsy that no Colorado epilepsy specialist will recommend?

Alaska 2004 • Measure 2 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$875,240
In State from	
Individuals	\$45,363
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$1,150
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$24,757
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$4,816
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$39,161
Total Proponents	\$ 990,487
Total Opponents	\$27,210
Total Raised	\$1,017,697

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Alaska 2014 • Measure 2 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$938,976
In State from	
Individuals	\$13,938
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$8,012
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$50
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$15,836
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$140,000
Total Proponents	\$ 1,116,812
Total Opponents	\$189,096
Total Raised	\$1,305,908

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Ballot Initiatives

Ballot initiatives offer citizens a way to write a law if they see a need legislators won't address. Anyone who lives in an initiative state¹ can sponsor a measure, explain his law in a paragraph, and collect signatures from a certain percentage of people who voted in the last election. If the Secretary of State validates enough signatures, the citizen's proposed law goes on the ballot for an up or down vote. In some states, successful initiatives become mere laws; in others, they change the state's constitution.

But here's the rub. *Any* citizen can write a law in an initiative state, even if she doesn't live there. So long as she plays by the state's rules and collects enough valid signatures, someone from New York, say, can write a law in Colorado or any of the other 23 states that allow "direct democracy." Any resulting financial costs are borne by the state's taxpayers, not the interloper who persuaded voters to pass a measure using political ads not always known for accuracy or truthfulness.

Ballot Initiatives Have Become Big Business

Ballot initiatives originated in the 1900s in California to give citizens power over corporate influence on the legislature. But collecting signatures to place an initiative on the ballot has become such a big business that only big businesses – or billionaires – can afford to participate.

Gone are the days when an idealistic group of volunteers went door-to-door collecting signatures from neighbors and friends to support a ballot measure. Today, whole businesses exist to collect signatures at so much per name, and they usually collect double those required to guarantee enough will be valid. In California, 365,880 valid signatures were required to place a measure on the November 2016 ballot at a cost of \$2.72-\$11.31 per signature. Few initiatives pass without significant advertising budgets to persuade citizens to vote yes, so only the rich can afford to sponsor a successful ballot initiative. And few ordinary citizens can raise enough money to oppose it. Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than with the three billionaires who financed the marijuana legalization movement.

Arizona 1996 • Prop 200 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,625,000
In State from	
Individuals	\$1,349
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$1,348
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$1,627,697
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$1,627,697

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Arizona 2000 • Prop 201 Recreational—Did Not Make Ballot	
Three Billionaires	\$600,000
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$600,000
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$600,000

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

When Alaska legalized marijuana for recreational use in 2014, Alaska residents raised nine times more money to defeat the measure (\$189,096) than to support it (\$22,000). But proponents from 45 *other* states raised \$1,094,812 – 41 *times* more than residents – to convince Alaskans to legalize pot. Who was behind the Alaska legalization effort?

Peter Lewis's Marijuana Policy Project

The Marijuana Policy Project (MPP) led the Alaskan effort, contributing \$836,333 to Measure 2: The Campaign to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol. MPP wrote the measure, paid contractors to collect signatures to place it on Alaska's ballot, and promoted it to voters. The organization is funded by billionaire Peter Lewis, who made

Arizona 2002 • Prop 203 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,160,756
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Companies	
Companies in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$1,160,756
Total Opponents	\$60,000
Total Raised	\$1,220,756

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Arizona 2010 • Proposition 203 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$593,606
In State from	
Individuals	\$35,735
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$25,000
Nonindividuals	\$32,468
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$2,380
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$3,333
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$100,000
Total Proponents	\$792,522
Total Opponents	\$28,993
Total Raised	\$821,515

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Arizona 2016 • Proposition 205 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$2,362,238
In State from	
Individuals	\$136,745
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$110,599
Nonindividuals	\$315,450
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$2,574,921
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$48,825
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$200,000
Nonindividuals	\$17,436
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$816,162
Total Proponents	\$ 6,582,376
Total Opponents	\$ 8,674,638
Total Raised	\$15,257,014

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

his money as head of Progressive Insurance, which Lewis grew into one of the largest auto insurance companies in the U.S. The company found its niche by insuring risky drivers. Lewis died in 2013, but his family supports both MPP and more recently New Approach PAC, a 527 organization committed to the legalization cause. Both are based in Washington DC.

George Soros's Drug Policy Alliance

The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) contributed \$100,000 to the Alaska campaign. DPA is funded by George Soros to do the work of legalization. Soros is the billionaire financier who famously became rich by breaking the Bank of England when he sold short \$10 billion worth of British pounds. He finances marijuana measures in his own name, through several funds like the Fund for Policy Reform at his Open Society Institute, and primarily through DPA. All are based in New York. Now that eight states have legalized recreational pot, DPA's director, Ethan Nadelmann, has set the organization's sights on legalizing *all* drugs, despite the opiate epidemic ravaging the nation. He explains why in a recent TED Talk, "Our desire to alter our consciousness may be as fundamental as our desire for food, companionship, and sex."

John Sperling

John Sperling is the only billionaire who funded marijuana initiatives in his own state of Arizona as well as in other states. Sperling amassed his fortune by founding the Apollo Group and the University of Phoenix. Roughly 90 percent of for-profit college revenues come from federal student loans, leaving graduates with heavy debt and some say inferior education. Sperling's support for legalization ended with his death in 2014.

NORML

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), the oldest legalization organization, contributed \$2,643 to the Alaska campaign. Contributions from other out-of-state proponents amounted to \$155,836. In all, nonresidents raised \$1,094,812 to legalize pot in Alaska and won. Residents raised \$189,096 to defeat it and lost. But then, \$189,096 doesn't buy much advertising. Nearly six times that amount, more than \$1 million, enabled MMP to spin a tale that Alaska voters bought.

Despite the imbalance in funding, Alaska's measure only garnered 53 percent support. Had the billionaires stayed out, pot likely would not be legal there. And Alaska authorities would not be struggling now with how to shield taxpayers from the financial burdens, to say nothing of the health and social consequences, legalization

Arkansas 2012 • Issue 5 Medical--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,423,952
In State from	
Individuals	\$27,335
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$12,218
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$2,200
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$6,700
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$6,172
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$1,478,577
Total Opponents	\$53,170
Total Raised	\$1,531,747

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Arkansas 2016 • Initiative 6 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	
In State from	
Individuals	\$850
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$455,077
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$272
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$115
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$430,078
Total Proponents	\$ 886,392
Total Opponents	\$6,024
Total Raised	\$892,416

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

brings. (Alcohol and tobacco each cost ten times more money than states receive from taxing them; legal pot will likely be no different as its health and social costs become apparent.)²

Users Alone Not Driving Legalization

Today, 1 in 12 Americans—just 8.3 percent—used marijuana at least once in the past month. That means 11 in 12 didn't. But polls show 90 percent want medical pot, and 60 percent want recreational pot. How did the billionaires persuade so many Americans that pot is medicine when most of the scientific and medical communities say it's not? And that marijuana is harmless and should be legal when those same communities say it isn't and shouldn't be?

How the Deception Began

In 1992, motivated by hints that billionaire George Soros might provide funding, several emerging advocacy groups met to develop a legalization strategy. Soros told them if they would stop advocating for legalization outright and instead “target a few winnable issues like medical marijuana,”³ he would fund the cause. He donated an estimated \$15 million to several groups, including the Drug Policy Foundation and the Lindesmith Center, which later merged to become the Drug Policy Alliance with Ethan Nadelmann as its head.

With money, the quest to legalize pot for recreational use by first medicalizing it could begin. In the words of Richard Cowen, NORML's director in 1993, at a conference celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Discovery of LSD:

The key to it [full legalization] is medical access. Because, once you have hundreds of thousands of people using marijuana medically, under medical supervision, the whole scam is going to be blown. The consensus here is that medical marijuana is our strongest suit. It is our point of leverage which will move us toward the legalization of marijuana for personal use.⁴

Now proponents could bypass legislators, write laws themselves in ballot initiative states, hire professional campaign organizations to collect signatures, and promote their measures to voters on television. They began in California and Arizona in the 1996 election.

Arkansas 2016 • Initiative 7 Medical—Did Not Make Ballot	
Three Billionaires	\$62,500
In State	\$100,526
Out of State	
Total Proponents	\$163,026
Total Opponents	\$58,825
Total Raised	\$221,851

Source: Ballotpedia. [See data analysis.](#)

California 1996 • Prop 215 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,583,088
In State from	
Individuals	\$30,011
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$464,916
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$401,666
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$2,479,680
Total Opponents	\$33,612
Total Raised	\$2,513,292

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

California 1996

Dennis Peron, who started the San Francisco Cannabis Buyers' Club in the early 1990s, wrote Proposition 215 along with other state activists. But their effort to get the initiative on California's ballot fell apart, and Nadelmann stepped in, hiring a Santa Monica professional campaign firm, Zimmerman and Markman, to fix things. Working under the name of Americans for Medical Rights, Bill Zimmerman said polling convinced him "that medical marijuana was a winnable issue. And that it could be used as an opening argument for the eventual legalization of recreational use."⁵

DPA raised \$2,479,680 to opponents' \$33,612 to get Prop 215 on the ballot and promote it on television. With 74 times more money than your opponents, you can sway a lot of voters. Nadelmann and Zimmerman focused their commercials exclusively on cancer. Here's the transcript from one, a testimonial from "Dr. Richard Cohen, San Francisco Cancer Specialist":

I've been treating cancer patients with chemotherapy for over 25 years. But the side effects can be very severe. Nausea. Vomiting. Loss of appetite. There is a medicine that can help. It's marijuana. I've seen it work. But we doctors are at great risk if we recommend it. Proposition 215 will allow doctors to recommend marijuana to patients who need it. Morphine works. Marijuana works. Let us physicians treat you with every medicine that can help.⁶

Another commercial featured a woman who claimed marijuana cured her breast cancer. "I broke the law and got marijuana. Today, I'm free of cancer." A third featured Anna Boyce, registered nurse, who claimed marijuana gave her husband J.J., who had cancer, "an extra year of life." But as Nurse Boyce knew perfectly well because she helped write Prop 215, the initiative legalized marijuana to treat not only cancer but also "anorexia, AIDS, chronic pain, spasticity, glaucoma, arthritis, migraine, *or any other illness for which marijuana provides relief* [emphasis added]."⁷ Proponents failed to tell voters this. They sold Prop 215 as a cure for cancer, period.

A few weeks after Prop 215 passed, Zimmerman spoke at NORML's annual conference to explain how they won. "We came in with outside money. We bought the signatures. We had television advertising. We had sophisticated press strategies."

California 2010 • Proposition 19 Recreational--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,580,189
NORML	\$19,739
In State from	
Individuals	\$467,529
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$311,318
Nonindividuals	\$88,947
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$1,833,483
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$98,859
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$220,000
Nonindividuals	\$7,656
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$5,592
Total Proponents	\$4,633,312
Total Opponents	\$364,835
Total Raised	\$4,998,147

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

California 2016 • Proposition 64 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$22,829,841
In State from	
Individuals	\$174,158
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$2,000,000
Nonindividuals	\$90,646
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$9,206,499
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$29,485
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$1,250,000
Nonindividuals	\$25,757
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$60,015
Out of Country Contributions	\$600
Total Proponents	\$35,667,001
Total Opponents	\$2,512,438
Total Raised	\$38,179,439

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Colorado 1998 • Initiative 40 Medical—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$739,563
In State from	
Individuals	\$1,316
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$1,316
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$742,195
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$742,195

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Colorado 2000 • Initiative 20 Medical—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$15,000
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$15,000
Total Opponents	\$3,200
Total Raised	\$18,200

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Colorado 2006 • Amendment 44 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$164,709
In State from	
Individuals	\$379
Nonindividuals	\$11,502
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$25,457
Total Proponents	\$202,047
Total Opponents	\$1,080,969
Total Raised	\$1,283,016

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Colorado 2012 • Amendment 64 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$2,846,394
In State from	
Individuals	\$51,833
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$31,998
Nonindividuals	\$17,373
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$31,875
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$369,237
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$0
Nonindividuals	\$7,300
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$135,065
Total Proponents	\$3,491,075
Total Opponents	\$706,826
Total Raised	\$4,197,901

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Soon afterwards, Dennis Peron told the *New York Times Magazine* that now he bought marijuana from California growers for \$3,200 a pound and sold it for \$65 for an eighth of an ounce, which is equivalent to \$8,320 a pound, or a 160 percent markup. He claimed he sold between 20 to 30 pounds per week. That works out after costs to a tax-free profit of between \$5.3 million and \$8 million a year. (Most states that have legalized pot for medical use do not tax it since it is “medicine.”)

Arizona 1996

The billionaires, with Sperling in the lead, took an entirely different approach in Arizona. Their Drug Medicalization, Prevention, and Control Act of 1996 legalized not just marijuana but *all* Schedule I drugs for medical use—heroin, LSD, peyote, MDMA (Ecstasy), psilocybin, Quaaludes, etc. But none of the commercials the billionaires aired told voters that Prop 200 would turn heroin into medicine. With opponents raising no money, once again proponents controlled the message.

Here is one ad they ran:

A lot of campaigns play games with the truth. But Proposition 200 wants to give you the facts straight from the Secretary of State’s ballot. A yes vote means that violent drug offenders must serve their entire prison sentence with no parole. [Arizona law already required violent offenders to serve 85

Florida 2014 • Amendment 2 Medical—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$460,000
Morgan & Morgan	\$4,092,721
In State from	
Individuals	\$2,194,643
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$511,905
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$282,300
Out of State from	
Individuals & Nonindividuals	\$261,945
Individuals & Companies in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$266,046
Total Proponents	\$8,069,560
Total Opponents	\$6,359,132
Total Raised	\$14,428,692

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Florida 2016 • Amendment 2 Medical—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,130,000
Morgan & Morgan	\$2,741,971
In State from	
Individuals	\$1,529,801
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$98,500
Nonindividuals	\$324,799
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$106,666
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$153,128
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$15,000
Nonindividuals	\$6,800
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$91,700
Total Proponents	\$6,198,364
Total Opponents	\$3,474,686
Total Raised	\$9,673,050

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Maine 2009 • Question 5 Medical—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$161,900
Other Out of State	\$1,745
In State	\$200
Total Proponents	\$163,845
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$163,845

Source: Ballotpedia. [See data analysis.](#)

Maine 2016 • Question 1 Recreational--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$3,095,754
Other Out of State	
In State	\$349,139
Total Proponents	\$3,444,893
Total Opponents	\$294,282
Total Raised	\$3,739,175

Source: Ballotpedia. [See data analysis.](#)

percent of their sentences.] And doctors would be able to prescribe *marijuana* to terminally and seriously ill patients with special precautions. Vote yes on Proposition 200. It's a better way. Paid for by Dr. John Sperling, Peter Lewis, George Soros, and the Drug Policy Foundation.⁸

The Arizona legislature overturned Prop 200 soon after it passed, replacing the initiative with a law specifying that doctors cannot *prescribe* any drug not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (California's Prop 215 called for doctors to "recommend" rather than "prescribe" medical pot. Because the Arizona legislators were right, "recommend" became standard in future initiatives.)

The next year, switching names from Arizonans for Drug Policy Reform to The People Have Spoken, the billionaires came back with a new measure to overturn the legislature's actions—and succeeded, initiating an ongoing battle with legislators. After 14 years and several more attempts, with Proposition 203 the billionaires finally medicalized pot (but no other Schedule I drug).

Massachusetts 2008 • Question 2 Decriminalization—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,468,156
In State	
Individuals	\$92,405
MMJ Industry	\$1,000
Out of State	
Individuals	\$13,882
MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$1,575,443
Total Opponents	\$80,670
Total Raised	\$1,656,113

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Massachusetts 2012 • Question 3 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,268,381
In State from	
Individuals	\$4,749
MMJ Industry	\$10,000
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$10,540
MMJ Industry	\$25,000
Total Proponents	\$1,318,670
Total Opponents	\$16,344
Total Raised	\$1,335,014

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Massachusetts 2016 • Question 4 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$5,967,214
NORML	\$147,800
In State from	
Individuals	\$105,874
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$150,000
Nonindividuals	\$59,620
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$84,500
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$34,704
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$100,000
Nonindividuals	\$44,485
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$159,200
Total Proponents	\$6,853,396
Total Opponents	\$3,059,324
Total Raised	\$9,912,720

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Revealing the Strategy to Like-Minded Advocates

At NORML's 2000 Annual Conference, with eight successful medical marijuana initiative campaigns under their belts, Bill Zimmerman told attendees:

Our polling shows that only a small minority of Americans wants to change drug policy . . . 20 percent at best when you talk about legalizing drugs. So, you need to educate them, help them understand that the position they're taking is wrong, ill-informed, misguided, whatever.

The way "to move people where we want them to go," he explained, is to put forward initiatives that "have been crafted by public opinion polling and focus group research so that we know exactly how far people are willing to go."

Approaching legalization incrementally works, he continued. It allows us "to project that 'we win every time on this issue,' which is important, he said, "because that puts increasing pressure on the federal government" to repeal the drug laws.

A Commercial Medical Marijuana Industry Emerges

And so it went. From 1996 through 2009, Soros, Lewis, and Sperling raised nearly all the money it took to float 22 legalization ballot initiatives. More failed than succeeded. Nonetheless, they persuaded ten states to medicalize pot during this period. Then an interesting thing happened. By 2010, the billionaires had pushed enough states to allow commercial marijuana cultivation, processing, and sales that a medical pot industry had emerged, one making a lot of money. To expand its market so it could make even more, the industry joined the billionaires to finance ballot initiatives legalizing *recreational* pot.

Success: Pot Goes Recreational

The billionaires achieved their long-sought goal of full legalization two years later in Colorado and Washington, and once they did, they virtually stopped financing medical pot ballot initiatives. Instead, they donated \$44 million to legalize recreational pot in Alaska and Oregon in 2014 and in California, Arizona, Nevada, Massachusetts, and Maine in 2016. (Only Arizona defeated the measure funded by the billionaires and the medical marijuana industry they created.)

Michigan 2008 • Proposal I-8 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,985,432
In State from	
Individuals	\$13,569
Nonindividuals	\$285
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$13,136
Nonindividuals	\$185
Total Proponents	\$2,012,608
Total Opponents	\$304,031
Total Raised	\$2,316,639

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Montana 2004 • Issue -148 Medical—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$554,505
In State Individuals	\$427
Out of State Individuals	\$150
Total Proponents	\$555,082
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$555,082

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Had they really believed marijuana is medicine, the billionaires would presumably still be sponsoring medical marijuana bills. It's only if they saw medical marijuana as a door opener to recreational pot that it made sense for them to abandon pot as medicine. For decades they denied they used the issue of medicine to legalize recreational pot. But as this report documents, numbers don't lie.

It is clear from available financial data that these initiatives were neither sponsored, wanted, nor supported by residents. Instead, the billionaires and the industry they created made legalization happen with the power of money on grossly uneven playing fields. They did it by persuading voters that pot is medicine despite a lack of scientific evidence, FDA approval, or support from the medical community. Their money overwhelmed opponents who eschewed such changes in their states but were fundamentally powerless to stop it.

Montana 2012 • Veto Referendum I-124 Medical—Passed	
(To affirm the legislature's veto of a 2004 MMJ initiative and create a more restrictive MMJ program. The marijuana industry opposed it.)	
Three Billionaires	
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$3,321
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$34,750
Total Proponents	
Total Opponents	\$ 38,071
Total Raised	\$38,071

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Montana 2016 • Initiative 182 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	
In State from	
Individuals	\$6,915
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$3,000
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$229,500
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$100
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$ 239,515
Total Opponents	\$192,322
Total Raised	\$431,837

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Financing Marijuana Legalization Laws, 1996-2009

State	Initiative	Kind	Status	Soros, Lewis	In State		Other Out of State		Total	Total	Total
				& Sperling	Others	MMJ Industry	Others	MMJ Industry	Proponents	Opponents	Raised
AZ 1996	P-200	Med	Passed	1,625,000	1,349		1,348		1,627,697		1,627,697
CA 1996	P-215	Med	Passed	1,583,088	494,927		401,666		2,479,680	33,612	2,513,292
AK 1998	M-8	Med	Passed								
AZ1998	P-300	Med	Failed								
AZ1998	P-301	Med	Passed								
CO1998	I-40	Med	Failed	739,563	1,316		1,316		742,195		742,195
NV1998	Q-9	Med	Passed	232,733					232,733		232,733
OR1998	M-67	Med	Passed								
WA1998	I-692	Med	Passed								
ME1999	Q-2	Med	Passed								
AZ 2000	P-201	Rec	Withdrawn	600,000					600,000		600,000
CO 2000	I-20	Med	Passed	15,000					15,000	3,200	18,200
NV 2002	Q-9	Rec	Failed	575,000			275		575,275		575,275
AZ 2002	P-203	Rec	Failed	1,160,756					1,160,756	60,000	1,220,756
AK 2004	M-2	Rec	Failed	875,240	46,513	24,757	4,816	39,161	990,487	27,210	1,017,697
MT 2004	I-148	Med	Passed	554,505	427		150		555,082		555,082
OR 2004	M-33	Rec	Failed	484,395	78,724	1,081	4,220		568,420		568,420
CO 2006	A-44	Rec	Failed	164,709	11,881		25,457		202,047	1,080,969	1,283,016
NV 2006	Q-7	Rec	Failed	3,042,325	15,189		23,669	604,995	3,686,179	272,000	3,958,179
SD 2006	M-4	Med	Failed	463,001	15,592		16,200		494,793	3,439	498,232
MA 2008	Q-8	Decrim	Passed	1,468,156	92,405	1,000	13,882		1,575,443	80,670	1,656,113
MI 2008	P-8-1	Med	Passed	1,985,432	13,854		13,321		2,012,608	304,031	2,316,639
ME 2009	Q-6	Med	Passed	161,900	200		1,745		163,845		163,845
Subtotal 1996-2009				15,730,805	772,377	26,838	508,065	644,156	17,682,240	1,865,131	19,547,372
Percent 1996-2009				80%	4%	0.1%	3%	3%		10%	

Financing Marijuana Legalization Ballot Initiatives, 2010-2016

State	Initiative	Kind	Status	Soros, Lewis	In State		Other Out of State		Total	Total	Total
				& Sperling	Others	MMJ Industry	Others	MMJ Industry	Proponents	Opponents	Raised
AZ 2010	P-203	Med	Passed	593,606	68,203	25,000	5,713	100,000	792,522	28,993	821,515
CA 2010	P-19	Rec	Failed	1,599,928	556,476	2,144,801	106,515	225,592	4,633,312	364,835	4,998,147
OR 2010	M-74	Med	Failed	37,800	71,910		4,242	33,600	147,552	34,475	182,027
SD 2010	M-13	Med	Failed	49,850	17,649	7,081	315	3,820	78,715	28,379	107,094
AR 2012	I-5	Med	Failed	1,423,952	39,553	2,200	12,872		1,478,577	53,170	1,531,747
CO 2012	A-64	Rec	Passed	2,846,394	69,206	63,873	376,537	135,065	3,491,075	706,826	4,197,901
MA 2012	Q-3	Med	Passed	1,268,381	4,749	10,000	10,540	25,000	1,318,670	16,344	1,335,014
MT 2012	I-124	Med	Passed			3,321		34,750	38,071		38,071
OR 2012	M-80	Rec	Failed		71,413	484,000	4,300	10,000	569,713	71,159	640,872
WA 2012	I-502	Rec	Passed	3,734,700	35,909	230,000	879,418	1,291,508	6,171,535	15,995	6,187,530
AK 2014	M-2	Rec	Passed	938,976	21,950	50	15,836	140,000	1,116,812	189,096	1,305,908
DC 2014	I-71	Rec	Passed								
FL 2014	A-2	Med	Failed	460,000	6,799,269	282,300	261,945	266,046	8,069,560	6,359,132	14,428,692
OR 2014	M-91	Rec	Passed	5,965,410	3,573,268	962,283	1,032,277	2,514,486	14,047,724	324,017	14,371,741
OH 2015	I-3	Med-Rec	Failed	-	7,670	21,218,596	4,774		21,231,040	2,173,935	23,404,975
AZ 2016	P-205	Rec	Failed	2,362,238	452,195	2,685,520	66,261	1,016,162	6,582,376	8,674,638	15,257,014
AR 2016	I-6	Med	Passed		455,927	272	115	430,078	886,392	6,024	892,416
AR 2016	I-7	Med	Passed	62,500	100,526				163,026	58,825	221,851
CA 2016	P-64	Rec	Passed	22,829,841	264,804	11,206,499	55,242	1,310,615	35,667,001	2,512,438	38,179,439
FL 2016	A-2	Med	Passed	1,130,000	4,596,571	205,166	159,928	106,700	6,198,364	3,474,686	9,673,050
ME 2016	Q-1	Rec	Passed	3,095,754	174,570		174,569		3,444,893	294,282	3,739,175
MA 2016	Q-4	Rec	Passed	6,115,014	165,494	234,500	79,189	259,200	6,853,396	3,059,324	9,912,720
MT 2016	I-182	Med	Passed		6,915	232,500	100		239,515	192,322	431,837
NV 2016	Q-2	Rec	Passed	1,119,652	1,476,325		1,476,325		4,072,301	3,771,500	7,843,801
ND 2016	M-5	Med	Passed	22,660	8,615			971	32,246		32,246
Subtotal 2008-2016				\$55,656,656	\$19,039,167	\$39,997,962	\$4,727,012	\$7,903,593	\$127,324,387	\$32,410,396	\$159,734,783
Percent 2008-2016				35%	12%	25%	3%	5%		20%	
Total 1996-2016				\$71,387,461	\$19,811,544	\$40,024,800	\$5,235,077	\$8,547,749	\$145,006,627	\$34,275,527	\$179,282,155

As of 2/10/2017. Sources: Follow the Money, Ballotpedia, National Families in Action Archive. Note: Follow the Money added \$1,015,880 more contributions to California's Proposition 64 sometime after our cutoff date of 2.10.2017 bringing total contributions for marijuana ballot initiatives between 1996 and 2016 to \$180,298,035.

Why It Matters

By using “medical” marijuana as the means to achieve recreational pot, the billionaires have taken us back to the days before Congress created the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 when profit motives drove the sale of impure food and impure, worthless medicines, some of which addicted, maimed, or killed people. Whether they meant to or not, the billionaires have created a commercial marijuana industry that is so intensely motivated by profit it is willing to destroy the food and medicine regulatory process that has protected public health for more than a century.

Why Were Regulatory Controls Needed?

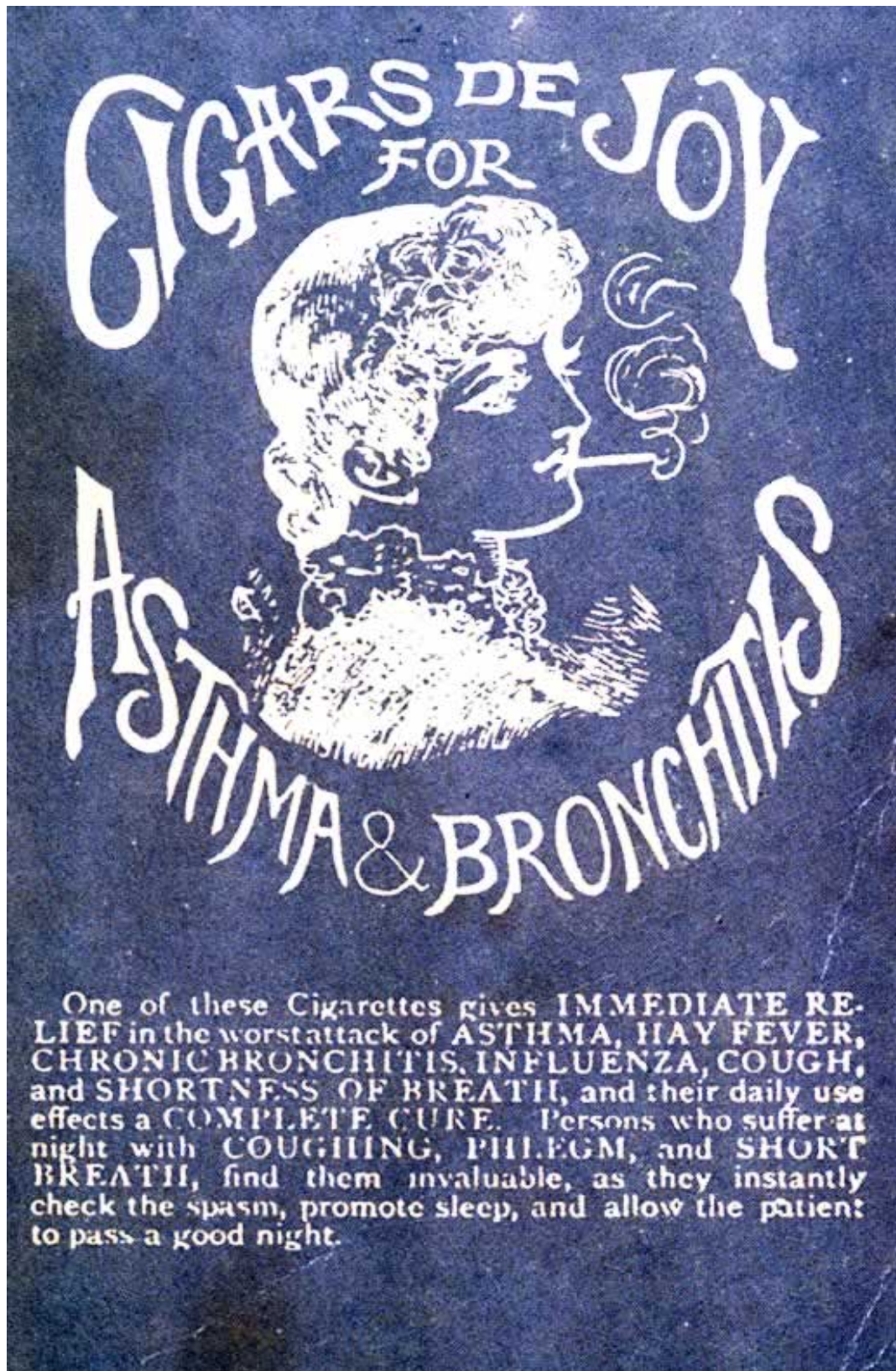
While it is true that addictive drugs have been used medically throughout history, for centuries addictive drugs were all we had. Anesthetics weren’t developed until the 1840s. Before then, a broken leg had to be set or an infected tooth pulled without anesthesia. Doctors either administered alcohol to get patients very drunk, knocked them out with blows to the head, or hired up to four large men to hold patients down while they did their work.

Patent Medicines of the 1800s

Medicines weren’t regulated until the 20th century. Before then, anyone could produce a medicine, patent it, make claims for its curative powers, and sell it. Popular patent medicines in the 19th century included such “medicines” as *Fatoff Obesity Cream* and *Hamlin’s Wizard Oil* claiming to cure rheumatism and a host of other conditions with no scientific evidence to back up such claims.



Most patent medicines were simply worthless. People bought them but didn't get the cure or relief promised. Others were dangerous. *Cigars de Joy for Asthma and Bronchitis* guaranteed that cigarettes would cure lung disease, but 100 million smoking-related deaths in the 20th century and millions more in the 21st give the lie to this claim.



The advertisement features a central illustration of a man's head in profile, facing right. He has a full, dark beard and mustache. He is holding a lit cigarette in his mouth, and a plume of smoke rises from it. The background is a solid, dark blue. The text is in a light, possibly white or yellow, color. At the top, 'CIGARS DE JOY' is written in a large, stylized, gothic-style font, with 'FOR' in a smaller, simpler font between the two words. Below the illustration, 'ASTHMA & BRONCHITIS' is written in a similar large, stylized font, curving around the bottom of the man's head. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a block of text in a smaller, serif font, all in capital letters.

CIGARS DE JOY
FOR
ASTHMA & BRONCHITIS

One of these Cigarettes gives **IMMEDIATE RELIEF** in the worst attack of **ASTHMA, HAY FEVER, CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, INFLUENZA, COUGH,** and **SHORTNESS OF BREATH,** and their daily use effects a **COMPLETE CURE.** Persons who suffer at night with **COUGHING, PHLEGM,** and **SHORT BREATH,** find them invaluable, as they instantly check the spasm, promote sleep, and allow the patient to pass a good night.

Some patent medicines contained other addictive drugs, even heroin. With no requirement to list ingredients on labels, unsuspecting people used them and became addicted. The maker of *Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup* promoted it to mothers for teething babies, but the product contained heroin and alcohol and caused coma, addiction, and sometimes death in infants.

Also, doctors routinely prescribed heroin to women of means to treat their "nervousness" and other ailments. They also gave morphine to soldiers suffering devastating injuries in the Civil War. The combination of the medical administration of opiates and widespread distribution of patent medicines produced an epidemic of opiate addiction during the latter half of the 1800s. By the end of that century, a consensus had developed that doctors were over-prescribing opiates, patent medicines containing opiates and other addictive drugs were proliferating, and controls were needed.



Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, FOR CHILDREN WHILE CUTTING THEIR TEETH.
AN OLD AND WELL-TRIED REMEDY FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

MRS. WINSLOW'S
For Children While Teething
SOOTHING SYRUP

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP has been used for over Fifty Years by millions of mothers for their children while TEETHING with perfect success. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain; cures Wind Colic, and is the best remedy for Diarrhœa. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, and take no other kind. **TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.**

Evolution of FDA Driven by Tragedies

Congress passed the 1906 act to establish controls. The law (and later revisions) required that food and drugs be pure, contents be labeled, and medicines be effective before they could be shipped to other states, and it established the FDA to oversee the regulations. A Tennessee company formulated the miracle drug sulfa into a pediatric liquid form, but its solvent turned out to be a deadly poison. In just two months, more than 100 people taking the drug died, many of them children. The 1906 act did not require that drugs be tested for toxicity, but the public outcry over this tragedy spurred the passage of the Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics Act of 1938, which added toxicity testing to the other protections.

The addition of safety enabled the U.S. to avoid other tragedies like the one that occurred in Europe when pregnant women were prescribed thalidomide for morning sickness, which caused thousands of babies to be born without arms or legs. An FDA scientist withheld approval of the German company's drug for distribution here because of abnormalities she saw in toxicity studies. Instead, she called for further research. While the company gathered more data, scientists discovered that thalidomide caused the birth defects, and U.S. babies were spared a similar fate. The process Congress and FDA gradually developed over the years in response to such incidents not only prevented tragedies but also facilitated the greatest advances in medicine in history, extending the lifespan by 30 years in the 20th century.

Patent Medicines of the 2000s

In its eagerness to enter "the green rush," the billionaires' medical marijuana industry eradicates these protections. Like patent medicines of old, unsubstantiated claims for the curative powers of marijuana abound today. Harms occur but there is no uniform mechanism to recall products causing the harm. Some pot medicines contain no active ingredients, according to warning letters FDA issued to CBD producers last year. Others contain contaminants.

In February 2017, University of California Davis Medical Center doctors published an article in *Clinical Microbiology and Infection*. They reported that some of their cancer patients undergoing intensive chemotherapy had acquired fungal infections in their lungs. The doctors teamed up with a drug testing laboratory, gathered samples from medical marijuana dispensaries across California, and tested them



"Medicated" (marijuana-infused) Gummi Bears and real Gummi Bears candy. Children cannot tell them apart. [Click image to see more.](#)

thoroughly. They were shocked by the test results: *90 percent* of the samples were contaminated with bacteria, other pathogens, and fungi, including a type like the one that infected their patients, who it turned out were using marijuana to allay their chemotherapy-induced nausea. The patients were young and had beatable cancers. But one died, not from his cancer but from his fungal infection. The doctors warn that patients with compromised immune systems should not smoke marijuana, which provides the avenue for fungi to enter the lungs and cause infection. People suffer while marijuana medicine men, like their patent medicine predecessors, make money at patients' expense.

Objective Reporter?

CNN's Sanjay Gupta, MD, gave the commercial marijuana industry a huge boost when he produced three documentaries called *Weed*, declaring "science is clearly" on the side of pot. In 2015, he called for a medical marijuana revolution on April 20, the day pot smokers nationwide gather outdoors to flout federal and state law by openly smoking weed. (Even where recreational marijuana is legal, smoking pot in public is not. Yet.) In insisting "We should legalize medical marijuana. We should do it nationally. And, we should do it now," Dr. Gupta crossed the line that separates objectivity from outright hucksterism.

"It's really fascinating," he told Anderson Cooper on air, "because we're used to an FDA process where you have the trials that take place and then you're given a certain dosage and all that stuff." But what happens with marijuana "is you have these different strains and they [the producers] will create these hybrids . . . and then, you know, the people who are the dispensers will oftentimes be talking to the patients who come in, finding out what works for them."

The dispensers Dr. Gupta refers to are "budtenders" – the marijuana equivalent of bartenders. Unlike pharmacists, who must earn a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, budtenders have no medical training. Dr. Gupta is willing to abandon all that FDA "stuff" that assures Americans their medicines won't hurt or kill them to promote bogus claims that may be doing more harm than good.



The Stanley Brothers' Charlotte's Web Oil

In *Weed*, Dr. Gupta promoted CBD oil, the kind the American Epilepsy Society calls “artisanal” because no CBD product sold in legal states has been purified to FDA standards, tested, or proven safe and effective. The most famous CBD developers, thanks to Dr. Gupta’s documentaries, are Colorado’s Stanley brothers who grew a strain of marijuana “low in THC and high in CBD” they named “Hippies’ Disappointment.” Josh Stanley explains this in his TED Talk on YouTube called *The Surprising Story of Medical Marijuana and Pediatric Epilepsy*. They extracted the strain’s CBD, named it Charlotte’s Web, and promoted it as a treatment to reduce seizures in children with epilepsy. The unctuous brothers are so persuasive they convinced Americans, including legislators they lobbied, that Charlotte’s Web provides miracle relief for these children. In just three years, 17 state legislatures legalized “artisanal” CBD oil, the kind that is sickening children with epilepsy who are being treated in Colorado.

The Stanleys recently rebranded Charlotte’s Web into a wellness product, CW Hemp Extract, with a potential market several times larger than kids with epilepsy. They and their distributors are filing lawsuits against anyone who calls Hippies’ Disappointment a “marijuana strain” or their rebranded product “medical marijuana,” even though to get where they are today that is what they themselves called both the plant and the product. The new brand is bringing in a million dollars a month according to the *Denver Post*.



HEMP OIL

(FROM BUDS & LEAVES **NOT** SEEDS)

CURES

CANCERS, DIABETES, ASTHMA, GLAUCOMA, MUTATING CELLS, SKIN CONDITIONS, BURNS & SCARES, INFECTIONS, ULCERS, WARTS & MOLES, ANXIETY & DEPRESSION, MIGRAINE HEAD-ACHES, INSOMNIA AND **MANY OTHER ILLNESSES!**

Do your own research at
<http://www.cbdresearch.com>

***GOVERNMENTS AND MEDICINE COMPANIES HIDE THE CURE FROM YOU! **STOP** IT NOW.**

Two ads found on the Internet. Left, the Stanley Brothers' "Charlotte's Web" oil. Right, "Hemp Oil" and claims it cures many illnesses.

The medical marijuana industry has somehow managed to convince itself that because a state has legalized pot for medical use, it is exempt from having to prove that its products are pure, safe, and effective like every other medicine maker must prove. Once Americans understand this, whether they will be willing to let it continue is debatable.

Easy to Deceive Those Who Don't Understand Science

One reason it's been so easy for the billionaires and the industry to deceive people about "medical" marijuana is that few understand how science works. A finding in a test tube does not amount to scientific consensus. It's a first step, not a final result. Many first steps end up going nowhere. The same is true with studies in animals, and even in humans. It's the accumulation of evidence in all these scientific "venues" that leads to, but does not yet establish, proof. Scientific proof comes from randomized, controlled clinical trials, the standard of evidence FDA requires for drug safety and efficacy before approval.



Whoopi Goldberg says her new line of medical marijuana products include Soak for the bath, which "offers relief from the aches, pains, and cramping associated with the menstrual cycle," according to the products' website.

Savor is "sure to help with inflammation, sleep, pain, irritability, joint pain, and the uterine cramping and discomfort associated with the menstrual cycle."

Rub will "relax uterine cramping and relieve sore joints and back pain."



Despite proponents' claims to the contrary, most of the evidence for marijuana components having medical use is at the test-tube, animal, or small-groups-of-humans level. Advocates insist that such preliminary evidence is "proof" that marijuana cures or relieves the astonishing number of conditions that states have approved marijuana to treat.⁹ The public, including legislators with little to no medical training, empathizes with those who are afflicted and quite understandably buys the spin.

Promise of "Medical" Marijuana Lies in Its Components, Not the Whole Plant

Marijuana is a complex drug containing about 500 chemicals. Some 100 of these are cannabinoids, so called because they are unique to the cannabis (marijuana) plant. FDA approved two oral cannabinoids, dronabinol and nabilone, in the mid-1980s to treat chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting and AIDS wasting. Several more, including some that have been approved in other countries, are seeking FDA approval in the U.S. These oral cannabinoids are either synthesized marijuana components (meaning pure chemicals were used to make "carbon copies" of them) or are extracted from marijuana and purified to eliminate the contaminants found in "artisanal" versions.

In January 2017, a committee of top scientists appointed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) issued a landmark report on the health effects of marijuana, both therapeutic and harmful. NAS was chartered by Congress during President Lincoln's administration to ensure that lawmakers have the most current science on which to base policy. However, it does not receive Congressional appropriations. Several federal agencies and private foundations financed the production of this report.

The NAS committee reviewed 10,700 abstracts of marijuana studies conducted since 1999, when it issued its last report on marijuana science. For therapeutic use, it finds that oral cannabinoids (dronabinol, nabilone, and others), but not marijuana, are effective for only two conditions: adults with chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting and multiple sclerosis (MS)-related spasticity. Oral cannabinoids, and in a handful of studies smoked or vaporized *research-grade* marijuana, have been shown to relieve symptoms of certain kinds of pain. For these three conditions, the effects are modest, says the committee. *"For all other conditions evaluated, there is inadequate information to assess their effects"* (emphasis added), including epilepsy and most of the other conditions states have legalized marijuana to treat. (Research-grade marijuana is grown at the University of Mississippi under a contract from the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse. Unlike "artisanal" marijuana that states are legalizing for medical use, research-grade marijuana is free of contaminants and provides a reliable, consistent dose each time it is used.)



Oral cannabinoids for the treatment of chemotherapy-related nausea and AIDS wasting. Approved by FDA in the 1980s.

Nevada 1998 • Question 9 Medical--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$232,733
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Out of State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$232,733
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$232,733

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Nevada 2002 • Question 9 Recreational--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$575,000
In State from	
Individuals	
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$275
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$575,275
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$575,275

Source: National Families in Action [Archive](#).

Nevada 2006 • Question 7 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$3,042,325
In State from	
Individuals	\$14,291
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$898
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$23,669
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$604,995
Total Proponents	\$3,686,179
Total Opponents	\$272,000
Total Raised	\$3,958,179

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Nevada 2016 • Question 2 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$1,119,652
In State from	
Others	\$1,476,325
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Out of State from	
Others	\$1,476,325
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$4,072,301
Total Opponents	\$3,771,500
Total Raised	\$7,843,801

Source: Ballotpedia. [See data analysis.](#)

Why Else It Matters

There is no evidence to suggest the billionaires pushed legalization to make money. Instead they seem to have been motivated by an ideology based on the uninformed belief that marijuana is not addictive, as Soros says in his autobiography *Soros on Soros*: “Some drugs are addictive; others like marijuana are not.”¹⁰

What Science Says about Marijuana’s Harms

Four major reports issued in the past year by the World Health Organization, the Surgeon General, the Food and Drug Administration/National Institute on Drug Abuse (which informed the Drug Enforcement Administration’s decision not to reschedule marijuana), and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) make clear that marijuana *is* addictive and has many other harms as well.

The NAS report finds that for adolescents, the drug impairs subsequent academic achievement and education, employment and income, and social relationships and social roles. Use before driving increases the risk of being involved in a motor vehicle accident. In states where it is legal, unintentional overdose injuries are occurring among children who accidentally eat marijuana-infused foods like the gummy bears pictured earlier in this report. Smoking marijuana during pregnancy lowers babies’ birth weights.

Marijuana impacts mental health in several ways. Use increases the risk of developing schizophrenia and other psychoses; the higher the use, the greater the risk. For those with bipolar disorders, near daily use may be linked to greater symptoms of bipolar disorder than non-users. Heavy users are more likely to report thoughts of suicide than non-users and are more likely to act on such thoughts.

North Dakota 2016 • Measure 5 Medical—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$22,660
Others	\$8,615
Out of State from	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$971
Total Proponents	\$32,246
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$32,246

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Oregon 2004 • Measure 33 Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$484,395
In State from	
Individuals	\$29,884
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$48,840
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$1,081
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$1,620
Nonindividuals	\$2,600
Total Proponents	\$568,420
Total Opponents	
Total Raised	\$568,420

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Oregon 2010 • Measure 74 Medical--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$37,800
In State from	
Individuals	\$65,541
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$6,369
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$4,242
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$33,600
Total Proponents	\$147,552
Total Opponents	\$34,475
Total Raised	\$182,027

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Oregon 2012 • Measure 80 Recreational--Failed	
Three Billionaires	
In State from	
Individuals	\$32,034
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$29,500
Nonindividuals	\$39,379
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$454,500
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$4,300
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$10,000
Total Proponents	\$569,713
Total Opponents	\$71,159
Total Raised	\$640,872

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Oregon 2014 • Measure 91 Recreational—Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$5,965,410
In State from	
Individuals	\$118,113
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$15,000
Nonindividuals	\$3,455,155
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$947,283
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$326,868
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$43,999
Nonindividuals	\$705,409
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$2,470,487
Total Proponents	\$14,047,724
Total Opponents	\$324,017
Total Raised	\$14,371,741

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Ohio 2015 • Issue Medical/Recreational—Failed	
Three Billionaires	
In State from	
Individuals	\$7,670
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$21,218,596
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State from	
Individuals	\$4,774
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$21,231,040
Total Opponents	\$2,173,935
Total Raised	\$23,404,975

Source: Ballotpedia. [See data analysis.](#)

Greater frequency of use or initiating use at a younger age increases the likelihood of developing addiction. Of particular concern during the epidemic of opiate deaths the U.S. is experiencing, there is evidence that frequent marijuana *also increases the risk for addiction to other drugs*, including opiates.

How Many Americans Are Addicted to Marijuana?

“Rates of addiction are commonly reported as 9 percent of those who try it,” says Jonathan Caulkins, PhD, Stever Professor of Operations Research and Public Policy at of Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College, “rising to 17 percent of those who start in adolescence. Most people who try the drug do not go on to use often; only about one-third use as many as 100 times, the usual definition for having ever smoked in the tobacco literature. So, addiction rates are essentially three times higher – meaning 27% and 51% among those who ever used with any notable frequency. Even those figures may be underestimates because they come from an era when THC potencies were below 5 percent vs. average potencies of 15 percent or even higher among dispensary products today.”¹¹

South Dakota 2006 • Measure 4 Medical--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$463,001
In State from	
Individuals	\$700
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$14,892
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Out of State	
Individuals	\$16,200
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	
Total Proponents	\$494,793
Total Opponents	\$3,439
Total Raised	\$498,232

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

South Dakota 2010 • Measure 13 Medical--Failed	
Three Billionaires	\$49,850
In State from	
Individuals	\$14,980
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	\$2,669
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$7,081
Out of State	
Individuals	\$315
Individuals in MMJ Industry	
Nonindividuals	
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$3,820
Total Proponents	\$78,715
Total Opponents	\$28,379
Total Raised	\$107,094

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Washington 2012 • Issue 502 Recreational--Passed	
Three Billionaires	\$3,734,700
In State from	
Individuals	\$34,378
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$155,000
Nonindividuals	\$1,531
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$75,000
Individuals	\$859,613
Individuals in MMJ Industry	\$855,955
Nonindividuals	\$19,805
Nonindividuals in MMJ Industry	\$435,553
Total Proponents	\$6,171,535
Total Opponents	\$15,995
Total Raised	\$6,187,530

Source: Follow the Money. [See data analysis.](#)

Conclusion

We have learned from the tobacco industry that an addictive drug is a business dream because a certain percentage of users will become addicted and guaranteed lifetime customers. Making an addictive drug legal, like alcohol and tobacco are, unleashes a commercial business that is unable to resist the opportunity to make billions of dollars on the back of human suffering, unattained life goals, disease, and death.

The billionaires and the organizations they fund have hammered home the message that marijuana is harmless, not addictive, and a medicine. If the public understood that marijuana is addictive, that addiction rates may be three times higher than reported, and that the drug can cause cognitive, safety, and mental health problems, neither voters nor legislators would be likely to legalize pot.

Nonetheless, the legalization billionaires and/or their families, the legalization organizations they funded and/or continue to fund, and the marijuana industry they created continue to exploit the sick to get what they want—legal, recreational pot in all 50 states. If they achieve their goal, not only will dangerous adverse reactions like those occurring in Colorado to children with epilepsy continue, but the nation and its children will face an unprecedented array of new health, safety, and financial consequences as a direct result of the billionaires' reckless actions.



National Families in Action Profile

Celebrating 40 Years of Drug Prevention, Education, and Policy

Since its founding in 1977, National Families in Action (NFIA) has worked to protect children from alcohol, tobacco, and other addictive drugs. The organization's mission is to teach the public about the science of addictive drugs and work to prevent their industries from targeting children. NFIA has carried out its mission with several important projects.

From the late 1970s to the early 1990s, it helped lead a national **Parent Movement** to help parents protect children from a drug culture that encouraged and glamorized drug use. This movement is credited with reducing past-month drug use among adolescents and young adults by two-thirds and daily marijuana use among 12th grade students by 500 percent between 1979 and 1992.

With two grants from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention in the 1990s, NFIA took the parent movement to parents living in Atlanta public-housing communities via **Inner-City Families in Action** and to their middle-school children via **Club HERO** (Helping Everyone Reach Out).

From 1999 to 2011, NFIA partnered with Wake Forest University School of Medicine to conduct the **Addiction Studies Program for Journalists**. The program's goal was to provide those who shape public opinion with an understanding of the science that underlies drug use, abuse, and addiction in order to help journalists report the drug story with scientific accuracy. This program trained more than 500 print, broadcast, and electronic journalists.

In 2005, the founders added two additional partners, the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Treatment Research Institute, to create the **Addiction Studies Program for the States**. This program helped state governments improve their drug policies based on science. By the time it concluded in 2014, it had trained teams from nearly all states. Both programs were funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Between 2003 and 2007, National Families in Action implemented a \$4.2 million grant from Congress through the Corporation for National and Community Service to create and conduct a pilot program of the **Parent Corps** at 19 schools in 9 states. From each school, NFIA recruited, trained, and employed a Parent Leader whose job was to educate and mobilize the school's parents into drug prevention. Principals report these results: communications with parents doubled and student attendance and grades increased, while discipline problems and drop-out rates decreased.

The pilot program ended in 2007 but continued in Georgia with funding from the Imlay Foundation, Newman's Own Foundation, the Sembler Company, and others for three additional years. Congressman John Lewis has introduced The National Parents Corps Act to make the Parent Corps a permanent institution in every new Congress since 2007.

In 2010, with support from Newman's Own Foundation, the organization began **But What about the Children?** This educational effort seeks to help policymakers find ways to protect children from a legal, commercial marijuana industry that will market the drug to them, like the alcohol and tobacco industries do. NFIA anticipated what actually happened in 2012 when Colorado and Washington legalized marijuana. In May 2013, with a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, NFIA hosted a marijuana workshop for leaders from Colorado, Washington State, and other states facing legalization. The workshop, keynoted by President Jimmy Carter, sought to help legalization states develop regulations to protect children from commercial marijuana and other states to seek marijuana policies that chart a middle road between incarceration and legalization.

An outgrowth of the workshop was the creation of **The Marijuana Report.Org**, a website that tracks the

marijuana story as reported in the print and broadcast press, and ***The Marijuana Report***, a weekly e-newsletter that goes out to 10,000 subscribers and features the most important stories posted to the website the previous week. The mission of our marijuana education work is to help leaders make informed decisions about marijuana policy, whether they be politicians who make public policy, business leaders who make workplace policy, educators who make school policy, volunteer leaders who make community policy, or parents who make family policy.

Throughout the course of its work, NFIA has amassed a **Drug Information Collection** containing several hundred thousand documents that trace the evolution of the drug legalization and drug prevention movements in the United States from the 1970s to the present. We hope to locate the collection at an academic library so that it can be digitized and made available for scholars to study the history of drug use, abuse, and addiction in America since the 1970s.

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References

¹ States with ballot initiatives include Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Maryland and New Mexico have veto referenda, which enable citizens to ratify or veto a law the legislature has passed. Source: *Ballotpedia*.

² Total social costs were \$223.5 billion for alcohol in 2006 (in terms of lost workplace productivity, health care expenses, and crimes related to excessive drinking) and \$289 billion for tobacco each year from 2009 to 2012 (in terms of direct medical care for adults and lost productivity from premature death). (See "The Cost of Chronic Diseases and Health Risk Behaviors." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed December 5, 2014.) These numbers far outweigh any tax revenue received from their sales: \$23.8 billion in state and local alcohol and tobacco taxes and \$24 billion in federal excise taxes for alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and ammunition collected in 2011. *Tax Facts*. Tax Policy Center. Urban Institute and Brookings Institution. Accessed December 5, 2014.

³ Cynthia Cotts, "Smart Money," *Rolling Stone*, May 1994.

⁴ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccjLM4-4U2k>.

⁵ Quotations are taken from videotapes of NORML conferences that National Families in Action transcribed and posted in the NFIA Archive. See [here](#) and [here](#). A full account can be read [here](#).

⁶ Transcribed from a videotape of the commercials Americans for Medical Rights aired to convince California voters to pass Proposition 215 in 1996.

⁷ See <http://www.nationalfamilies.org/guide/california215-full.html>.

⁸ Transcribed from a videotape of commercials proponents aired to convince Arizona voters to pass Proposition 200.

⁹ States have legalized marijuana to treat the following conditions (does not include states that have legalized CBD for intractable seizures only): Any debilitating illness where the medical use of marijuana has been deemed appropriate and has been recommended by a physician, Any debilitating condition as recommended by a DC licensed doctor, Any patient admitted into hospice care, Any patient with a condition for which the qualified patient's practitioner has determined that the use of medical cannabis may provide relief, Any terminal or debilitating condition, Anxiety, Alzheimer's Disease, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), Anorexia, Arnold Chiari Malformation, Arthritis, Autism, Cachexia, Cancer, Causalgia, Cerebral Palsy, Cervical Dystonia, Chemotherapy Induced Anorexia, Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy, Chronic Nervous System Disorders, Chronic Pain, Chronic Pancreatitis, Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome Type 2, Crohn's Disease, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis, Elevated Intraocular Pressure, Epilepsy, Fibromyalgia, Fibrous Dysplasia, Glaucoma, Hepatitis C, HIV or AIDS, Huntington's Disease, Hydrocephalus, Hydromyelia, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Interstitial Cystitis, Intractable Pain, Intractable Spasticity, Irreversible Spinal Cord Injury, Lupus, Migraine, Mitochondrial Disease, Moderate to Severe Vomiting, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Myasthenia Gravis, Myoclonus Nausea, Nail Patella Syndrome, Neurofibromatosis, Neuropathies, Other conditions as determined in writing by a qualifying patient's physician, Other medical conditions may be approved by the Department of Consumer Protection, Persistent Muscle Spasms, Parkinson's Disease, Post-Surgical Back Pain with a condition called Chronic Radiculopathy, Post Laminectomy Syndrome, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD), Rheumatoid Arthritis, Seizures, Severe Nausea, Severe Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis, Sickle Cell Disease, Sjogren's Syndrome, Spinal Cord Disease, Spinal Cord Injury or other conditions that cause Intractable Spasticity, Spinocerebellar Ataxia (SCA), Syringomyelia, Tarlov Cysts, Terminal Illness Requiring End-Of-Life Care, Tourette's Syndrome, Traumatic Brain Injury and Post-Concussion Syndrome, Ulcerative Colitis. Source: NORML. <http://norml.org/legal/medical-marijuana-2>

¹⁰ George Soros with Byron Wien and Krisztina Koenen. *Soros on Soros: Staying Ahead of the Curve*. John Wiley and Sons, 1995, p 198.

¹¹ Personal communication.

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