



## **e.Forum Posit**

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Mexico plans to decriminalize possession of modest amounts of all commonly used/abused drugs. A partial list of allowed drugs and amounts includes:<sup>1</sup>

- Marijuana 5 grams
- Heroin 25 mg
- Cocaine 0.5 grams
- Methamphetamine 200 mg
- Phencyclidine 7mg.

Posit: "We should follow the lead of Mexico, and cease making criminals of addicts and fools, to focus on producers and distributors of drugs of abuse."

Posit results: Agree - 59, Disagree - 72, No Opinion - 6; 27 unedited comments appear below.

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"This will lead to an increased number of dealers to be available to serve the increased number of users. Bad idea!!" - Charles Maas, MD

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"Drug abuse is a health (medical) problem that is only exacerbated by The War on Drugs. Akin to Alcohol Prohibition, drug prohibition serves to enrich the criminal enterprise at the expense of the rest of us, with the exception of the prison industry and perhaps those who are corrupted by drug money. When Prohibition ended in 1933, the rate of violent crime plummeted. Switzerland saw a similar decrease in other crimes when drug abuse was decriminalized. Legislating morality tends to be unsuccessful, and is often counterproductive. Several knowledgeable authors, including Jim Gray and Jeff Miron, have published persuasively about this problem. Decriminalized drug use will eliminate the outrageous profits, the corruption, and the waste of resources spent on enforcing and punishing this otherwise "victimless crime" - Lee Welter, MD

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"So now that we have stopped a whole lot of people from smoking cigarettes (but still dealing with the effects/after-effects of this abuse and will do so for another 2 decades) and will move on to something more potent, expensive, habituating and addictive and add a whole lot of additional problems to the overburdened and depleted medical system! You call this preventive health care and cost containment? Huh!" - Elisabeth Mathew, MD

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"Decriminalization of drug use increases adequate supervision and authoritative control of these substances. Economically, it would decrease the criminal elements that today surround the use and distribution of these substances. It puts the responsibility of its use on the shoulders of the users and can be properly managed like other formerly illegal chemicals, i.e. alcohol." - Jose Ma C Leuterio, MD

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"If possession of a huge amount of heroin is a crime, a small amount should be viewed the same. The border between Mexico and the US is such that a person can legally enter and leave multiple times a day. A 25 mgm heroin can become 250 mgm in one day. Same argument applies to the rest of the list." - J.M. Young, MD

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"I can't agree with legalizing the possession of drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin or PCP. However, the legalization of marijuana, a drug less harmful than alcohol

and tobacco, and a drug easily obtained without purchase, would go a long way towards freeing our law enforcement resources for more important battles... like going after the distributors." - Jody Gordon, MD

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"Please note that the amounts of drugs are substantial and should be lower for the non marijuana drugs, The exception is meth which should never be 'legalized.'" - Keith Brewer, MD

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"Any decision of this magnitude needs serious reflection and analysis. Maybe that has been the case in Mexico...and the Netherlands seem to be doing fine. Although I don't know the exact laws there, whether they have reduced drug related crime, or led to increased addiction/health burden. Certainly in the US where we love to supersize everything this could have some grave impacts." - Tim Weaver MSII UCD

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"It's time to leave our Puritan roots behind. Legalizing these drugs does not lead to long term increases in abuse. It does allow us to tax the drugs, theoretically. By decriminalizing these drugs it makes it easier to help these people." - Jeffery J. Rabinovitz, MD

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"It is more complex than this emotionally charged statement suggests, however decriminalizing and making drug use safe would be a good start." - Thom Atkins, MD

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"I feel that use and possession should not be decriminalized but perhaps the punishment should be participation in an AA type program. However, the punishment for sale should be very harsh." - Dennis Marks, MD

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WHY IMPROVE THE SELLING POINT OF THE DEALER?" - Alexandra Greene, MSIV UCD

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"I believe in the legalization and control of all the above, thus entirely removing the profit and crime factors. Interestingly, my father, a pharmacist and toxicologist, gave speeches urging this in the 1930's. Not a popular stance then, or now." - James Affleck, MD

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"All these drugs should be decriminalized and replaced by appropriate health warnings and restrictions, especially for children." - Douglas Hershey, MD

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"Go after producers and distributors like Pfizer and Merck!" - Kris Srinivasan, MD

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"These are all dangerous drugs, they are harmful in any amount-the one exception might be the Marijuana" - James Alan Margolis, MD

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"It has been shown that the \$70,000.00 spent yearly for prison terms for these addicts could be used more effectively and inexpensively in rehab programs and get them back into the work force of our society. To start by ending the time and money spent on penalizing these addicts, we can best stop the traffic of drugs by ending the demand for them." - Franklin Long, MD

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"Let me get this straight. The proposal is to increase the number of customers (by eliminating possibility of being arrested) and hope that pursuing dealers will reduce the problem. Un-believable." - Thomas Christensen, MD

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"A drug is legal or illegal. Need to keep the rules on narcotics simple." - Roseanne Pevac, MD

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"Unfortunately this makes too much sense, and would save too much money by lowering the burden on our (very expensive) jails. So of course this was rapidly shot down. Instead we will continue to react viscerally instead of with our heads, pursuing our current moralistic, punitive and wildly unsuccessful approach." - Francisco Prieto, MD

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"I believe we need to focus on all individuals and systems responsible for drug abuse-most especially the producers and distributors, but also the addicts and fools. Thank you." - Chris Gresens, MD

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"Why would you want to follow the lead of a third world country that is too corrupt to

even employ or care for its citizens?. Be that as it may, how could you possibly enforce anti-drug laws when you decriminalize their use? I can understand legalizing Marijuana, but hard drugs like PCP and Methamphetamines? Have you ever been in an emergency room that cared for one of these psychotically paranoid and violent addicts? Ridiculous idea!" - Donald Hause, MD

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"Abuse/ use by some should not - in principle- affect the law to the point that we allow what we know to be wrong. if that were the case, then when would we make murder legal? rather, the penalty for such folly as drug use/ abuse should be softened for those who are addicted/ fools, while it is hardened for suppliers, etc. as a result, the principle of the matter is not sacrificed. as an analogy, the one who commits murder out of a state of rage, unintentioned, should not be treated the same as the cold blooded killer - when it comes to the penalties - in principle." - Syed Ameen Khasimuddin, MD

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"The "Drug War" - The most recent FAILED attempt at Prohibition was, like the earlier one, based on the radical religious elite using the power of the state to try to coerce the entire society to accept their warped view of morality. The entirely predictable result has been the emergence of gangs and violence and crime." - G R Swafford, MD

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"Recreational use of addictive drug is not medically indicated, and will only increase the number of addicts. addiction of any nature has serious social as well as health implications" - Rugmini Shah, MD

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"It is an "iffy" move to allow possession of these drugs. So, I would suggest that we wait and see how the Mexican "experiment" works out before making such a move in this country." - E T Rulison, Jr., MD

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