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To: [Lisa Adair](#)
Subject: Special permanent use permit for a cannabis retail only operation
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I oppose a special permanent use permit for a cannabis retail only operation.

What does Rio Communities gain by issuing such a permit?

Marijuana remains an illegal drug under the federal Controlled Substances Act.

Marijuana legalization would increase crime not only because marijuana may be a gateway to more serious drugs such as cocaine and heroin that are closely associated with crime, but also because of the potential criminogenic effects of the increasing presence of marijuana dispensaries (Cleveland & Wiebe, 2008; Kepple & Freisthler, 2012).

One of the assumptions about the legalization of recreational marijuana held that once legal dispensaries were common, the illicit trade would be unable to compete. After all, why would anyone want to purchase something illegally, and theoretically without safety regulations, when it could be found just as easily legally?

This has not turned out to be true. In California, Illinois, Massachusetts and other states with legal recreational dispensaries, black market marijuana sales not only continue, but often outpace legal sales. Huge busts of illegal operations regularly made One of the assumptions about the legalization of recreational marijuana held that once legal dispensaries were common, the illicit trade would be unable to compete. After all, why would anyone want to purchase something illegally, and theoretically without safety regulations, when it could be found just as easily legally?

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This has not turned out to be true. In California, Illinois, Massachusetts and other states with legal recreational dispensaries, black market marijuana sales not only continue, but often outpace legal sales. Huge busts of illegal operations regularly make the news and in response, California recently approved a \$100 million plan to aid the state's legal marijuana industry—an industry that was supposed to be an untapped goldmine. California, Illinois, Massachusetts and other states with legal recreational dispensaries, black market marijuana sales not only continue, but often outpace legal sales. Huge busts of illegal operations regularly make the news

Substantial increases in crime rates and disorder at the neighborhood level (Hughes, Schaible, & Jimmerson, 2019)

The study, by researchers at the University of Colorado Denver, appears in *Justice Quarterly*, a publication of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

"We found that neighborhoods with one or more medical or recreational dispensaries saw increased crime rates that were between 26 and 1,452 percent higher than in neighborhoods without any commercial marijuana activity," notes [Lorine A. Hughes](#), PhD, associate professor in the [School of Public Affairs](#) at the University of Colorado Denver.

Betsy Brantner Smith, a retired police sergeant and spokeswoman for the National Police Association, said legalizing marijuana can cause downstream effects for law enforcement officers in jurisdictions where the drug is legal.

"The whole country, we're seeing this increase in crime that goes hand in hand with a decrease in concern about

things like substance abuse,” Smith told the *Washington Examiner*. “The problem is, when you continue to desensitize the population against substance abuse, you start to desensitize them against a sense of right and wrong.”

Smith, who trains police officers, said she hears from “boots on the ground” that legal cannabis isn’t itself fueling higher crime rates.

Does marijuana really increase the risk of depression?

- Using marijuana can certainly **contribute to** or worsen **depression**. Low motivation, fatigue, and withdrawal from positive activities are central features of **depression** and marijuana can worsen each of those problems. Some people do say that marijuana dulls anxiety or negative feelings. But it also dulls energy and motivation.
- A recent study review published by Lancet Psychiatry found high-cannabis-potency products are associated with a greater risk of psychosis and addiction called cannabis use disorder (CUD).

"The content of THC not many decades ago was 2%-3%," Dr. Nora Volkow, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, told Fox News, adding that marijuana is considered high in potency if the product contains more than 10% THC.

"Now, the average content of THC in the United States is 14-16%," she said. "There are [cannabis] varieties that have a content that goes to 30% THC."

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