



# Florida Police Chiefs Association

*Quality Law Enforcement for the Sunshine State*

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## **For Immediate Release**

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## **FLORIDA POLICE CHIEFS URGE CAUTION ON MEDICAL MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION**

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – The Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) today urged Floridians to rethink their support of the proposed amendment to legalize marijuana in Florida, calling the effort a potentially dangerous threat to families and communities.

“Regardless of any state laws, recreational marijuana use is still illegal on the federal level because of its high potential for abuse and the fact that there is no currently accepted national standard for use as a medical treatment,” said Chief Frank Kitzerow, President of the FPCA. “It’s important to understand that expanding the use of marijuana for medical purposes is not a safer way to use the drug.”

Studies show that marijuana use and criminal involvement – other than drug use – are highly related. Medical marijuana is often sold in storefront dispensaries; in other states, the storefront dispensaries have become magnets for crime and increased law enforcement costs. According to statistics provided by the city’s Department of Safety, Denver recorded 7,000 reported crimes within 1,000 feet of dispensaries in the first six months of both 2012 and 2013.

Statistics have shown that marijuana also plays a significant role in car accidents. Between 2006 and 2010, the Colorado Department of Highway Safety reported that at least 183 people were killed by drivers who tested positive for cannabis, after Colorado legalized marijuana for medicinal purposes. There are more than 120 ER visits related to marijuana use for every 100,000 people in the United States.

The expansion of marijuana use has also been shown to have a negative impact on surrounding business communities. A study found employees who tested positive for marijuana have 55 percent more industrial accidents and 85 percent more injuries than non-users, and 78 percent have higher absentee rates than non-users. Drug-using employees have been shown to have up to 300 percent higher medical costs, which increase insurance rates for employers and employees.

For more information on the potential impacts of the proposed amendment, please visit

<http://www.dontletfloridagotopot.com>.

*The FPCA is the fourth largest state police chiefs association in the nation and is composed of more than 750 of the state's top law enforcement executives. FPCA serves municipal police departments, airport police, college and university police, private business and security firms, as well as federal, state and county law enforcement agencies. The FPCA has members representing every region of the state.*

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