

MARIJUANA POLICY REPORT

Volume 12, Number 3 – Fall 2006

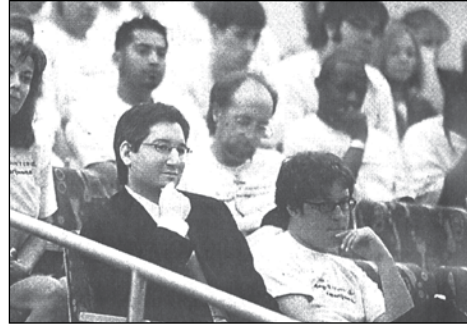
Inside This Issue:

- From the Executive Director 2
- Drug Czar Under Attack 3
- Election 2006: Local Initiatives 4
- Expanded School Drug Searches 5
- South Dakota Medical Marijuana Initiative 5
- In Brief 6
- Research 8
- Grants Program 8
- Media Highlights 9
- State Legislative Briefs 10
- MPP at NCSL 10
- Brazil Decriminalizes Drugs 11
- MPP Launches Radio Ads 11
- MPP Debates White House 11
- Playboy Tickets on Sale 12

Marijuana Initiative Defeated in Nevada, 44% to 56%

On November 7, Nevada voters defeated MPP's ballot initiative to end marijuana prohibition in the state, by a 56% to 44% margin. The measure would have permitted the possession and use of up to one ounce of marijuana by adults aged 21 and older, and it would have taxed and regulated marijuana similarly to alcohol.

The high-profile campaign tied with Alaska for the all-time largest vote ever to end marijuana prohibition in a state, despite fierce opposition from the White House drug czar's office and local law enforcement officials. Indeed, the fact that Nevadans were able to vote on the initiative at all was in itself a victory. (See



Isaac Brekken/Review-Journal

CRM Campaign Manager Neal Levine prepares to confront the Clark County Commission over its illegal activities against the Nevada ballot initiative on September 19. The showdown was captured in one of the campaign's "websisodes," as well as by the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

"From the Executive Director," p. 2.) And this year's results mark an improvement over the last time Nevadans voted to

[See Nevada, page 3](#)

Coming Next Issue:

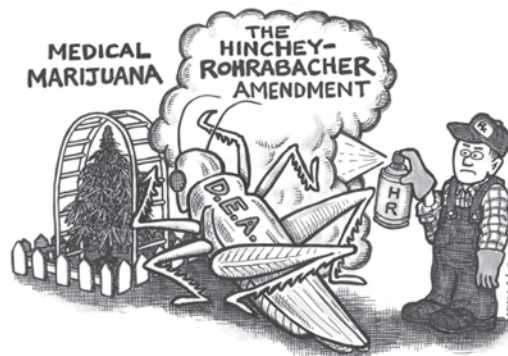
- ▶ Pro-medical marijuana Democrats take over committee chairmanships in Congress
- ▶ California court rules on San Diego County's challenge to the state's medical marijuana law
- ▶ Voters in Flint, Michigan vote on local medical marijuana initiative

Chances for Medical Marijuana Legislation in Congress Best Ever

The midterm congressional elections have provided the most favorable conditions for passing federal medical marijuana legislation in MPP's 12-year history.

When Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) becomes speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in January, it will mark the first time that a strong medical marijuana supporter has ever led the House. Additionally, Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), another staunch supporter of medical marijuana, is expected to become chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and longtime supporter Rep. Dave Obey (D-Wis.) is expected to chair the House Appropriations Committee. Both committees play key roles in MPP's legislative work.

The new leadership bodes especially well for the annual Hinchey-Rohrabacher medical marijuana amendment in the House. On June 28, 2006, a record 163 House members voted in favor of the measure, which would have protected medical marijuana patients from federal



THE "ANTI-RAID"

arrest and prosecution. The bipartisan amendment, introduced by Reps. Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.) and Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), would have prevented the U.S. Justice Department — which includes the DEA — from spending taxpayer money to raid, arrest, or prosecute seriously ill patients in the 11 states where medical marijuana is legal.

The amendment garnered two more votes than the previous vote in 2005;

[See Congress, page 4](#)



**P.O. Box 77492 • Capitol Hill
Washington, D.C. 20013
tel 202-462-5747 • fax 202-232-0442
mpp@mpp.org • www.mpp.org**

MPP, founded in January 1995, is a 501(c)(4) lobbying organization. Because MPP devotes 100% of its efforts toward influencing public policy, contributions are not tax-deductible.

MPP Foundation, founded in May 1996, is a 501(c)(3) educational organization. Contributions to MPP Foundation are tax-deductible.

MPP Medical Marijuana Political Action Committee, founded in September 2003, supports candidates for federal office who have taken action or pledged to take action to ensure that patients have safe and legal access to medical marijuana.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On November 7, when Nevada voters had the chance to make history — and worldwide news — by passing a ballot initiative to end marijuana prohibition in the state, they may not have realized how hard their state government fought to keep them from having that opportunity.

A similar initiative — which also would have taxed and regulated marijuana in the state — was originally supposed to be on the ballot two years ago, in November 2004.

But on July 13, 2004, Nevada elections officials announced that they would accept as valid only 34,947 of the 66,000 signatures that MPP had turned in to qualify the initiative for the ballot. (51,337 valid signatures were needed.) However, MPP's own signature validation had shown that 54,000 of the 66,000 signatures were valid.

What accounted for the discrepancy? First, Clark County threw out 19,830 signatures because of a previously unenforced "requirement" that one voter who signs each petition booklet must notarize an affidavit at the back of the booklet. The state had ignored this "requirement" in previous election cycles, 16 of 17 Nevada counties continued to ignore it, and the AFL-CIO had succeeded in court at blocking the "requirement" from taking effect.

Elections officials also threw out thousands of additional signatures from people who they claimed weren't registered voters — even though MPP had registered them and photocopied their registration forms before turning them in.

Additionally, after the deadline for

turning in the signatures that MPP's consulting firm had collected, a box of 6,000 signatures was found in the firm's office. To this day, we don't know whether an employee of the firm misplaced the box and then found it later, or whether the firm was sabotaged from within. MPP fired the consulting firm.

In late July, MPP filed suit in federal court to compel the Nevada government to place our initiative on the ballot, and on August 13, 2004, a judge ruled that Nevada's process for putting initiatives on the ballot was unconstitutional. The ruling threw out part of Nevada's constitution and triggered a statewide recount of the signatures.

But the state government kept fighting. Over the next two weeks, Nevada's elections officials openly broke the law during the recount — refusing to give MPP copies of our petitions so that we could check the validity of the government workers' recount and refusing to allow our campaign staffers to observe the recount process — even though this right was being granted to other initiative campaigns.

On September 1, 2004, after illegally disqualifying thousands of signatures from people who filled out voter registration forms the same day they signed the petitions, the Nevada government announced that we were 1,815 short. A week later, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2-1 to allow the state's actions.

Undeterred, two months later, we turned in 84,665 signatures to qualify a new initiative for the November 2006

ballot — far more than the 51,337 that were required. On December 7, 2004, Nevada officially certified that we had submitted more than 69,000 valid signatures — almost 18,000 more than were needed.

But it wasn't over. The state attorney general announced he was increasing the threshold to qualify from 51,337 to 83,156 — even though the state had repeatedly cited the lower number as recently as nine days after we turned in our petitions.

On January 12, 2005, MPP and the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit in federal court once again.

And on January 28, 2005, MPP won a sweeping victory, when a federal judge ordered the Nevada government to place the initiative on the 2006 ballot. Finding in MPP's favor on all counts, Judge James Mahan ruled that the state followed an unconstitutional procedure when it rejected the initiative. He ordered the state to send the initiative to the legislature when it convened on February 7. The legislature would then be required to consider our proposal and either pass it into law themselves within 40 days or place it on the November 2006 ballot so Nevadans could vote on it.

Earlier this month, Nevadans did just that. And the rest, as they say, is history.

MPP advocates harm-reduction-based marijuana policies.

Dan Bernath
assistant director of communications

Katelyn Bradwell
national field coordinator

Michèle Brinson
graphic designer

Sara Cannon
office administrator

Joshua Eveleth
deputy director of state policies

Alison Green
chief of staff

Joe Haptas
national field director

Will Holcomb
web administrator

Aaron Houston
director of government relations

Mark Hughes
communications assistant

Zane Hurst
legislative analyst

Rob Kampia
executive director

Neal Levine
director of state policies

Sarah Lovering
membership coordinator

Nathan Miller
legislative analyst

Bruce Mirken
director of communications

David O'Donnell
director of information technology

Karen O'Keefe
assistant director of state policies

Salem Pearce
director of membership

Bill Schneider
network and systems engineer

Nydia Swaby
grants and hiring coordinator

Sean Tempesta
systems administrator

Stephanie Vogel
grants and outreach director

Anthony Wagenseil
legislative analyst

Jordan Yanoshik
membership coordinator

INTERNS:
Sarah Hench
Jordan Mickman
Carmen White

VOLUNTEER
CARTOONIST:
Mark Mitcham

From [Nevada](#), page 1

end marijuana prohibition statewide; in 2002, a similar measure was defeated 39% to 61%.

Although the initiative didn't get the votes to win, MPP's Nevada campaign office, the Committee to Regulate and Control Marijuana (CRCM), rolled out an aggressive offensive. It blanketed the state with TV and radio ads, sent multiple mailings to likely voters, and engaged in unprecedented Get-Out-the-Vote efforts. In the end, the initiative won in one rural county and in Reno, and it improved over its 2002 showing in almost every county.

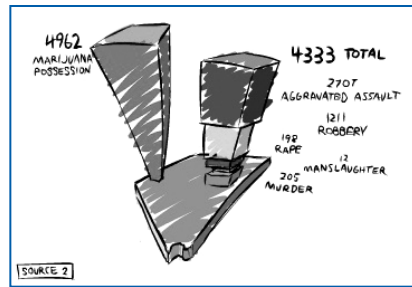
MPP has been working in Nevada since 2002 and began gearing up for this latest vote in early 2005, when the initiative was originally certified for the November 2006 ballot.

The campaign saw tremendous success on many fronts, thanks in part to its innovations in reaching out to young voters: It aggressively utilized the popular social networking site MySpace and the video-sharing site YouTube, offered information about voter registration via cell phone text messaging, and hosted a well-trafficked online message board and blog. The campaign's activities to pass the groundbreaking measure inspired a documentary production company to film the campaign's activities from the inside and release a series of six "webisodes" during the weeks leading up to the vote, with a full-length film to come later.

Three newspapers in the state — including the largest, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, as well as the rural *Lahontan Valley News* — editorialized in favor of the initiative. And in early October, a coalition of reverends, pastors, nuns, and rabbis spoke out in favor of it. A news conference about these religious leaders' support received widespread television and newspaper coverage both locally and nationally.

Volunteer support was especially key to the campaign's achievements. Volunteers from all over the country made more than 100,000 calls — including 5,000 on Election Day alone — through the campaign's phone banking program to identify supporters and persuade undecided voters. And lawn signs supporting the initiative became ubiquitous all across the state — even in the rural areas — as a result of volunteer efforts.

MPP's campaign manager, Neal



This still from a 90-second online animation that described MPP's ballot initiative in Nevada illustrates that arrests for marijuana possession in 2005 outnumbered arrests for many violent crimes combined.

Levine, regularly debated — and defeated — local prohibitionists like Las Vegas Police Detective Todd Raybuck of the Committee to Keep Nevada Respectable. Levine and Raybuck faced off on several occasions on local programs such as the popular Las Vegas cable show "Face to Face with Jon Ralston," as well as — just days before the election — on CNN Headline News.

Raybuck's committee was responsible for the inaccurate radio ads that began blanketing the Nevada airwaves in the days before the election. The ad made blatantly false claims, such as asserting that the initiative "hurts local business and takes away the right to drug test for marijuana" and aimed "to make street use of drugs legal." In their mailings and on their Web site, MPP's opponents also raised the specter of increased car insurance rates and of police and firefighters working while high.

When elected officials in Nevada — most notably the Clark County Commis-

sion — illegally campaigned against the initiative, MPP filed a formal complaint with the state attorney general, asking him to prosecute the officials. Nevada law prohibits government officials from spending taxpayer money, time, or resources to oppose or support a ballot question. The state ethics commission, however, effectively announced at the beginning of October that it would not pursue the initiative's opponents until after Election Day, giving the government officials free reign to continue to break the law.

White House Drug Czar John Walters visited the state four times in the weeks leading up to the election to campaign against the initiative and to award federal money to organizations willing to oppose it. MPP's staff and supporters protested each visit and on one occasion were joined in their opposition by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, which editorialized against Walters' use of taxpayer money to influence a state election.

This year's campaign in Nevada was one of only seven attempts to pass a statewide ballot initiative to end marijuana prohibition in a state; the other attempts were in California in the early 1970s, Oregon in 1986, Alaska in 2000 and 2004, Nevada in 2002, and Colorado in 2006. MPP believes that the latest results demonstrate voters' increasing willingness to reconsider marijuana prohibition and plans to return to Nevada to try again with another marijuana initiative in November 2010. **MPP**

Drug Czar Under Attack from All Sides

In late July, the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee cut funding for the salaries and expenses of the White House drug czar's office by more than half, "to more closely reflect actual performance."

One of MPP's priorities at the federal level is cutting the funding for the drug czar's office — the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), led by Drug Czar John Walters — since the agency houses the government's anti-marijuana media campaign. Since 2002, MPP's lobbying efforts have helped to achieve a 44% reduction in funding for the ad campaign.

The committee's budget slashing followed a March 2006 amendment to

the ONDCP Reauthorization Act by U.S. Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), which would have eliminated the drug czar's office within five years. Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Penn.) advanced a similar measure in the U.S. Senate. And in April, Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) — hardly a drug war critic — called on President Bush to fire Walters because of his agency's emphasis on marijuana.

Calls for Walters' ouster and budget cuts for his agency are only some of the problems his office faces. In August, an independent assessment of the drug czar's anti-marijuana TV ads found that the ads

See [Drug Czar](#), page 5

though slight, the increase was significant. The last time the amendment came before the House during an election year, in 2004, support dropped to a record low of 148 votes. That the amendment actually gained votes in an election year demonstrates the growing support for protecting medical marijuana patients and the increasing acceptance of medical marijuana as a mainstream issue.

Defying their hostile Republican leadership, 18 GOP members voted in June 2006 to protect medical marijuana patients — three more than in June 2005. Several notable Republicans supported the amendment, including Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.), the former chair of the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources, as well as Rep. John Campbell, a new, very conservative Republican from Southern California. On the Democratic side, Rep. John Murtha (D-Penn.), a high-profile member of the House Appropriations Committee, voted for the amendment this year, as did

Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.), the third-ranking Democrat in the House.

Working directly with an alliance of fiscally conservative groups, MPP and its allies secured a letter in support of the amendment from a coalition of notable conservative organizations, including Citizens Against Government Waste, the Liberty Coalition, and Americans for Tax Reform. In addition, MPP galvanized other groups to speak out against the DEA raids, reaching out to approximately 200 grassroots organizations. And organizations already supportive of medical marijuana — such as the American Nurses Association, the United Methodist Church, and the ACLU — were vocal in their support of the amendment.

MPP also ran an unprecedented grassroots campaign in California to pressure the state's Republican congressional delegation to support the amendment and, through MPP's grants program, provided funding for the former executive director of the San Diego Republican Party to lobby for the amendment. MPP

placed organizers in key congressional districts throughout the country to run high pressure, grassroots campaigns directed at targeted swing votes. Leading up to the vote, MPP's staff and lobbyists held more than 250 meetings with congressional offices and visited every single House Republican's office — an unprecedented outreach effort. And in the days before the vote, MPP staff delivered handcuffs — complete with evidence tags asking for a “yes” vote on the amendment — to more than 100 House offices.

The momentum for passing a meaningful medical marijuana measure in Congress is continuing to grow. Of the more than 50 House members who are leaving Congress at the end of this year, 38 have consistently voted against medical marijuana legislation on the House floor. Of the newcomers, MPP has identified almost 20 of them as already likely to support medical marijuana legislation. **MPP**

Election 2006: Local Initiatives

10 out of 10 Local Marijuana Initiatives Pass

On November 7, voters in 10 different locales across the country voted for change in their jurisdictions' marijuana laws.

Residents of Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Santa Monica, California and Missoula County, Montana voted to make marijuana offenses their cities' lowest law enforcement priority. All four of these initiatives were funded by the MPP grants program.

The measures passed 65%-35% in Santa Barbara, 64%-36% in Santa Cruz, 65%-35% in Santa Monica, and 53%-47% in Missoula County.

In 2004, 64% of voters in Oakland, California enacted a similar proposal, and the West Hollywood city council de-prioritized marijuana offenses this summer. The vote in Montana follows passage of a statewide medical marijuana initiative there in 2004.

Missoula's measure makes adult marijuana offenses the lowest priority for county authorities. Santa Cruz's measure makes adult marijuana offenses the city's

lowest police priority and urges the state and federal governments to tax and regulate marijuana similarly to alcohol. Santa Barbara and Santa Monica's measures make adult marijuana offenses their cities' lowest law enforcement priority if the marijuana is intended for personal use, as well as urging the state and federal governments to follow suit.

All four initiatives faced opposition from law enforcement officials, but endorsements from community leaders and local elected officials carried the measures to success.

The new laws will save taxpayer dollars and allow the police to focus on violent and serious crimes, instead of on arresting and jailing non-violent, adult marijuana users. They also mark growing support in both states for more sensible marijuana policies, and MPP hopes that these successes will lead to debates to end marijuana prohibition statewide.

Elsewhere on Election Day, residents of Albany, California voted to establish a medical marijuana dispensary in the city.

Measure D, sponsored by Americans for Safe Access, passed 53% to 47%; the planned dispensary will join the approximately 200 that are currently operating in California.

Additionally, in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, 63% of voters voted to make misdemeanor amounts of marijuana (one ounce or less) the city's lowest law enforcement priority. The Fayetteville, Arkansas chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws gathered the 144 signatures necessary to place the initiative on the ballot, making it the first marijuana measure to appear on any Arkansas ballot in state history.

And Massachusetts voters in four districts overwhelmingly passed two kinds of public policy questions (PPQs) on marijuana. The first and twelfth Plymouth Representative districts approved non-binding policy statements asserting that possession of up to one ounce of marijuana should be subject to a \$100 fine, while the seventh Norfolk Representative district and the third Middlesex Senate district voted in favor of medical marijuana PPQs. **MPP**

Congress Votes to Expand School Drug Searches

In a move that school boards and government attorneys alike called unnecessary and even dangerous, the U.S. House of Representatives in September passed a measure that allows the wholesale search of students' lockers and bags and even strip searches, based on mere suspicion of drug possession by one student. Moreover, leaders in the House scheduled the vote on the Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006 during the little time that remained before the midterm election recess, because U.S. Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-Ky.), the bill's sponsor, was in a tough reelection battle and wanted to tout the passage of his legislation. However, it is doubtful the Senate will pass the bill during its lame-duck session after Election Day. **MPP**

From **Drug Czar**, page 3

not only fail to reduce teen marijuana use, but in some cases actually *increase* teen marijuana use. (These ads feature teenagers committing violent crimes while under the influence of marijuana.) Moreover, the release of the report revealed that the drug czar's office had been in possession of these findings since early 2005 ... but had buried the findings and continued to run the ads in question anyway!

In 1998, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) commissioned Westat, a private research firm, to assess the efficacy of the ads. Among other findings, Westat determined that in some groups — particularly 12 ½- to 13-year-olds, and girls — marijuana use actually increased after exposure to the ads. But it wasn't until MPP pushed the administration to release the report in late 2006 that Westat's findings became public.

In response to the release of the report, on September 7 MPP's congressional lobbyist, Aaron Houston, confronted Walters as the drug czar held a news conference. Noting

the report's findings, Houston asked, "Don't you think that that suggests that your office is somewhat complicit in whatever higher rates of use there might be because you . . . knew this back in February 2005, but it was just released by NIDA last week?" In his response, Walters denied the validity of the report and charged that MPP staffers spend their time in "chat rooms encouraging people to use marijuana." Pointing to Houston, he cautioned the audience and reporters, "Make sure you keep your kids away from them."

Weeks later, the Capitol Hill publication *National Journal* wrote that a drug czar spokesperson had confirmed that "the office did not like the report's conclusions and chose to sit on it." Belying Walters' characterization of the report as a "sideshow," *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, CNN, Fox News, Slate, a Scientific American podcast, and newspapers around the country all covered the new evidence of the ad campaign's failure. **MPP**

South Dakota Rejects Medical Marijuana Initiative

On November 7, South Dakotans voted 52% to 48% to defeat a ballot initiative that would have protected seriously ill patients from arrest and jail for using marijuana with physician approval.

Early polling revealed that the initiative faced an uphill battle, particularly on a ballot filled with hot-button issues like abortion and gay marriage, and with the White House and the state government vocal in their opposition.

South Dakotans for Medical Marijuana (SDMM), the state group that worked to pass the initiative, spent much of 2006 in heated battle. SDMM aired three emotional radio ads and three TV commercials, taking its case directly to the voters. It also ran two newspaper ads in more than 100 weekly papers and sent three targeted mailings to likely voters. Volunteer spokespersons and medical marijuana patients Val Hannah and Cynthia Siragusa were featured in the various ads.

When state Attorney General Larry Long proposed misleading and inaccurate language for the ballot and the voter guides, SDMM successfully sued the South Dakota government in August. In his ruling in favor of SDMM, Judge Max Gors wrote, "The

attorney general should confine his politicking to the stump and leave his bias out of the ballot statement that is supposed to be objective."

Like the other two marijuana initiatives on statewide ballots in November, the measure attracted strong opposition from the White House drug czar's office. White House Deputy Drug Czar Scott Burns visited Rapid City and Sioux Falls in October to campaign against the initiative with Attorney General Long. During a news conference, Burns warned South Dakota voters, "Do not fall for the con" of medical marijuana.

On November 6, in response to a misleading opposition radio ad and a KELO-LAND TV poll showing support for the initiative at only 35%, SDMM unleashed a last-minute barrage of 130,000 calls to South Dakotans across the state urging them to vote in favor of the initiative and purchased additional radio ads. In the end, however, the initiative was narrowly defeated.

The South Dakota vote represents the first defeat for a statewide medical marijuana initiative. All previous measures — in Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington — were passed by a majority of voters. (In addition,

three state legislatures — in Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont — have also passed laws making medical marijuana legal.)

The defeat of the South Dakota measure comes in the wake of several recent studies that continue to confirm the medical value of marijuana. (See "Research," p. 8.) And, since 64% of South Dakotans support the concept of making medical marijuana legal — according to a 2002 Lucas Organization poll — SDMM plans to try again with another medical marijuana initiative in November 2010.

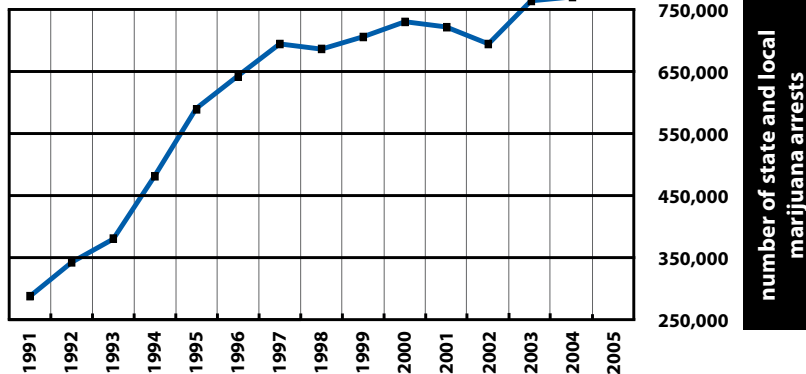
For more information, please visit the campaign Web site at www.sdmedicalmarijuana.org. **MPP**



Rapid City resident and multiple sclerosis patient Cynthia Siragusa explains her need for medical marijuana in a TV ad aired in South Dakota.

FBI Statistics Show Increase in Arrests

In September, the FBI released its annual crime report, revealing that state and local police arrested someone for marijuana once every 40 seconds in 2005. Moreover, these 786,545 marijuana arrests set a record for the greatest number of marijuana arrests in a single year in U.S. history.



Alaska Law Re-criminalizing Marijuana Struck Down

In June, Gov. Frank Murkowski (R) signed into law H.B. 149, which re-criminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana, despite a 2004 Alaska Supreme Court decision affirming that possession of up to four ounces of marijuana in the home is protected by the privacy clause of the Alaska Constitution. However, in July, a judge struck down part of this law, calling the Supreme Court decision “the law of the land” and making the home-possession of up to one ounce legal again. Murkowski’s troubles continued in August when he lost his primary bid for reelection and thus his chance at a second term as governor.

National Association of Counties on Meth vs. Marijuana

On July 18, the National Association of Counties released the study “Criminal Effects of Meth on Communities,” a survey of county law enforcement officials across the nation. Law enforcement officials identified marijuana as the primary drug problem in only 22% of all counties, while almost half of the counties identified methamphetamine as their primary drug problem. Fifty-five percent of counties reported significant rises in meth-related crimes, resulting in a 63% average increase in police workload for all counties.

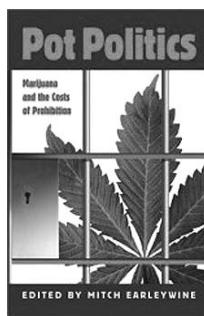
MPP Launches Medical Marijuana Financial Assistance Program in Nevada

In September, MPP launched a financial assistance program to help seriously ill Nevadans who cannot afford the \$200 fee to register with the state’s medical marijuana program. The cards protect them from state-level arrest. Applicants for MPP’s financial assistance program

must be Nevada residents, have incomes below 150% of the national poverty level, and have proof of medical necessity from a physician. Visit nv.mpp.org/patients for more information.

MPP Contributes to New Book on Marijuana Policy

In the newly released *Pot Politics: Marijuana and the Costs of Prohibition* (Oxford University Press), Mitch Earleywine — psychologist and author of *Understanding Marijuana* — has assembled a collection of chapters by leading researchers and thinkers from a variety of disciplines examining the scientific, ethical, and political aspects of marijuana policy. An essay by MPP Director of Communications Bruce Mirken explains how the media’s bad habits often lead to the misreporting of marijuana and drug policy stories. MPP co-founder Charles Thomas looks at the issue from a religious perspective.



AFSCME Endorses Medical Marijuana

In August, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) — the country’s largest union of workers in public service — passed a resolution endorsing medical marijuana access at its national convention. This endorsement was the work of MPP volunteer activist Fred Newton, who shepherded the resolution from introduction to final passage. The resolution acknowledges that marijuana has been shown to effectively treat many serious illnesses.

Justice Kennedy Speaks Out Against Sentencing Laws



In July, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy noted in a speech to a group of judges in Southern California that U.S. sentences are eight times longer than those in Europe. “If an 18-year-old is growing marijuana for a friend, that’s distribution,” said Kennedy. “If he has his father’s .22 rifle, that’s a firearm. That will get 15 years. Did you know what 15 years was when you were 18? I didn’t when I was 18.” Kennedy also complained that the people at whom the harsh sentences are aimed are largely unaware of them until they fall into the hands of the criminal justice system. “If sentences are to be a deterrent, what is the good of them if nobody knows how long they are?” he asked.

Medical Marijuana Victory in California Court

In September, a California administrative court ruled that low-income medical marijuana patients who receive state public assistance benefits may qualify for reimbursement for the cost of their marijuana. At issue was Lake County’s public assistance program, which suddenly stopped reimbursing a lupus patient’s out-of-pocket medical marijuana expenses, claiming that federal law prohibited it from doing so. The successful litigation of this three-year-long case, which was funded by the Drug Policy Alliance, is a huge step in bringing health parity to people who find that marijuana is the best treatment for their illnesses.

“It’s a good thing I had a bag of marijuana instead of a bag of spinach. I’d be dead by now.”

— Willie Nelson

Willie Nelson Charged with Marijuana Possession

In September, Willie Nelson and four others were issued misdemeanor citations when the country music star’s tour bus was pulled over during a routine traffic stop in Louisiana and one-and-a-half pounds of marijuana, as well as three pounds of psilocybin mushrooms, were found in a search. The amount was enough for a felony charge of distribution if possessed by one person, but since all five men claimed the drugs as their own, each was charged with a misdemeanor. Referring to the concurrent E. coli outbreak, Nelson later quipped of his arrest, “It’s a good thing I had a bag of marijuana instead of a bag of spinach. I’d be dead by now.”

U.S. Supreme Court Petitioned to Hear “Bong Hits 4 Jesus” Case

In August, former Whitewater special counsel Kenneth Starr filed a petition for the U.S. Supreme Court to take up Alaska’s “Bong Hits 4 Jesus” case. The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had ruled in March that a high school in Alaska violated a student’s right to free speech by suspending him for unfurling a banner reading “Bong Hits 4 Jesus” across the street from the school. The U.S. Supreme Court petition, filed on behalf of the Juneau School District, which is asking the court to overturn the ruling, must receive a minimum of four of the nine justices’ votes to be heard.

Texas Gubernatorial Candidate Favors Legalization

Independent Texas gubernatorial candidate Kinky Friedman said in September that he favors legalizing marijuana. In an AP interview, the musician-turned-author-turned-candidate said legalization would keep nonviolent users out of prison, adding that he would



seek the release of those currently behind bars for marijuana offenses. “I think that’s long overdue,” Friedman said. “I think everybody knows what John McCain said is right: We’ve pretty well lost the war on drugs doing it the way we’re doing it. Drugs are more available and cheaper than ever before. What we’re doing is not working.”

Voting Rights Act Reauthorization

When Congress passed a bill in July reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (a measure originally enacted to protect blacks from discrimination at the voting booth), it failed to include protections for a large category of people: those who have lost their voting rights as the result of a felony conviction. Today, blacks are disproportionately charged with drug crimes — they constitute only 13% of the nation’s drug users but account for 38% of those arrested for drug offenses — which means that disenfranchisement is still alive and well more than 40 years after 1965.

Study Shows Racial Differences in Users’ Risk of Arrest

A study of arrest data by researchers at Johns Hopkins University helps explain why blacks are 2.5 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession offenses than whites, even though general prevalence estimates show that they are no more likely to be using marijuana. Published in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* in October, the study investigates the purchase patterns of marijuana users from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health to evaluate whether differences in purchasing behaviors exist across racial groups. Although in general people who purchase marijuana are more likely to buy in private settings and from someone they know, this analysis shows that blacks are statistically more likely to engage in risky purchasing behaviors that increase their likelihood of arrest; for instance, blacks are nearly twice as likely to buy outdoors, three times more likely to buy from a stranger, and significantly more likely to buy away from their homes.

Cato Releases Study on Police Raids

In July, the libertarian Cato Institute published “Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America,” by former policy analyst Radley Balko. The report examines the militarization of U.S. civilian law enforcement over the past 25 years, along with the rise in the use of paramilitary police units (most commonly called Special Weapons and Tactics, or SWAT) for routine police work. The most common use of SWAT teams today is to serve narcotics warrants, usually with forced, unannounced entry into the home. The report provides a legal, historical, and policy background explaining the trend and explains how such confrontational tactics cause violence rather than lessening risks.

Colorado Rejects Marijuana Measure

On November 7, Colorado voters defeated by 60% to 40% a ballot measure to allow the possession of up to one ounce of marijuana by adults aged 21 and older. As a result, marijuana possession remains punishable by a \$100 fine in the state. Safer Alternative for Enjoyable Recreation (SAFER) launched the statewide campaign last year after Denver citizens voted to treat private, adult use and possession of marijuana in the same manner as the private use and possession of alcohol. Although the November 2005 initiative eliminated all city-level penalties for adult possession, Denver police are using state law to continue to fine people who are caught with marijuana. **MPP**



Dramatic New Findings Boost Medical Marijuana Science

Two significant studies released this summer underscored the value of medical marijuana.

The first — from researchers at the University of California at San Francisco, and published in the September issue of the *European Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology* — examined how marijuana use affected treatment for the hepatitis C virus (HCV). Untreated HCV can lead to liver failure and death, but in the new study, marijuana users being treated for HCV were three times more likely than those not using marijuana to have a “sustained virological response.” That is, the virus could not be detected six months after patients completed treatment — the standard for successful HCV therapy.

While extensive research has shown that marijuana can provide symptom relief, this is the first published study linking marijuana to improved cure rates for a life-threatening illness.

Moreover, HCV treatment utilizing the drugs ribavirin and interferon is notorious for its severe side effects, including nausea, vomiting, weight loss, sleeplessness, and depression, which cause many patients to discontinue the long, demanding regimen prematurely. In this study — of 71 recovering drug users receiving methadone maintenance while simultaneously being treated for HCV — those using marijuana were significantly more likely to complete their treatment regimens. The researchers theorized that marijuana relieved medication side effects sufficiently to allow patients to complete treatment and concluded, “Our results suggest that moderate cannabis use during HCV treatment may offer significant benefit to certain patients.”

Overall, 54% of marijuana users had a sustained virological response, compared to only 18% of non-users. The study was published alongside a commentary by a separate team of Canadian researchers describing the evidence that marijuana relieves debilitating side effects of treatment for HCV, cancer, and AIDS, and calling for patients to be “legally permitted” to use it.

In August, a remarkable study published online in the journal *Molecular Pharmaceutics* examined the role that THC — the main active substance in marijuana — may play in staving off Alzheimer’s disease. The neurological disorder, which causes progressive loss of memory and intellectual functioning, is marked by the formation of what are known as amyloid plaques, abnormal clumps of proteins around the cells of the brain. These plaques are the key pathological marker of this devastating disease and may play a central role in the loss of brain function.

In this lab study, researchers from the Scripps Institute in La Jolla, California, found that THC blocks the enzyme that facilitates the formation of these plaques — and that it does so completely. “Compared to currently approved drugs prescribed for the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease, THC is a considerably superior inhibitor” of the plaque-forming process, the scientists wrote. They added, “[T]hese findings offer convincing evidence that THC possesses remarkable inhibitory qualities.”

While neither THC nor marijuana have been tested as treatments for Alzheimer’s disease in humans, the new study adds to a growing mass of evidence showing that THC and other cannabinoids — marijuana’s unique, active components — can protect against many types of neurological damage.

Teen Drug Use Drops in California

In California, the state’s official survey of teen drug use was released on October 4, confirming the continuing decline in teen marijuana use since passage of the state’s medical marijuana law in 1996. According to the biennial California Student Survey, the rate of marijuana use by ninth graders in the past six months fell to 18.7%, the lowest level in more than a dozen years, and a drop of nearly half from the 34.2% figure recorded in 1995-96, the last survey before passage of Proposition 215.

While the survey belies the claims of medical marijuana opponents that such laws encourage teen marijuana use, it also found an even more dramatic reduction in teen cigarette use. Among ninth graders, 12.6% said they had smoked marijuana in the past 30 days, compared to 10% who smoked cigarettes. For eleventh graders, the figures were 19.2% and 15.2%, respectively. This trend has been consistent since the 2001-2002 survey but represents a reversal from 1997-1998, when cigarette use exceeded marijuana use in all age groups.

Unlike marijuana, cigarettes are sold by licensed, regulated merchants who are prohibited from selling tobacco to underage customers. In recent years, California has been cracking down on businesses selling tobacco to kids, and the new survey provides more evidence that regulating — not outlawing — a substance is the best way to keep it out of kids’ hands. **MPP**

MPP Grants Program

The grants program administered by the Marijuana Policy Project supports, with grants of up to \$60,000, efforts that foster measurable changes in U.S. public policy that will lead to marijuana being regulated similarly to alcohol and to marijuana being available for medical use. MPP’s grants program has distributed more than \$9 million to the marijuana policy reform movement over the past five years.

The grants program will consider proposals for any project related to marijuana policy reform, with the exception of political parties or candidates for office, state ballot initiatives, and hemp-related projects.

Applications for the upcoming grant round are due by January 1.

Potential grant applicants should send concise letters of inquiry to MPP’s grants director, at least seven days prior to a grant application deadline. The letter of inquiry should be one to three pages long and include an outline of the grant idea, listing the goals, strategies, and tactics of the proposed project, as well as the approximate size of the grant request. All proposals must clearly and convincingly communicate how the proposed project will measurably advance marijuana policy reform in the U.S. For more information, please visit www.mpp.org/grants. **MPP**

Media Highlights

Nevada Ballot Initiative

On June 21, the small, rural *Lahontan Valley News* editorialized in support of MPP's statewide initiative to tax and regulate marijuana in Nevada. The endorsement was covered by the Associated Press in a story that ran nationwide, including in the *Kansas City Star* and *Boston Globe*, as well as throughout Nevada. And on October 19, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* — the state's largest newspaper — followed suit with its own endorsement.

Nevada campaign manager Neal Levine made numerous TV appearances, including "Face to Face With John Ralston" on July 10 and "Nevada Newsmakers" on July 27.

September saw widespread coverage of polls showing the measure with a single-digit margin — ahead in one poll and behind in another. In addition, at least four Las Vegas-area TV stations and the *Review-Journal* covered Levine's confrontation with the Clark County Commission over its move to oppose the measure in violation of state law barring use of tax dollars to support or oppose ballot initiatives.

An October 3 news conference about religious leaders' support for the initiative resulted in national and local print coverage, including a *Reno Gazette-Journal* article quoting the Rev. William Webb of Second Baptist Church, the largest black church in Reno. "If there has to be a market in marijuana," he said, "I'd rather it be regulated with sensible safeguards than run by violent gangs and dangerous drug dealers." The clergy's statements were also covered extensively on TV, both within Nevada and around the country — including on CNN's "American Morning."



MPP's Neal Levine talks about religious leaders' support of the marijuana regulation measure on CNN's "American Morning" on October 4.

When White House Drug Czar John Walters swept into Las Vegas on October 12 to hand out federal money to groups opposing the initiative, he

appeared on KVBC-TV, the NBC station in Las Vegas, and was immediately followed by MPP's Neal Levine. And Levine also phoned in to KNPR-FM's "State of Nevada" while Walters was on, forcing an impromptu debate. The visit was also covered by the *Associated Press*, *Washington Times*, and the *Review-Journal*, among others.

A wrap-up of the coverage from the final weeks of the campaign will appear in the next *Marijuana Policy Report*.



MPP's Neal Levine appears on Las Vegas' NBC TV station on October 12 to oppose the drug czar's visit to Nevada.

South Dakota Medical Marijuana Initiative

On August 28, the Associated Press reported on the campaign's successful lawsuit to force a change in the prejudicial and misleading ballot language drafted by state Attorney General Larry Long. The story quoted Circuit Judge Max Gors' bluntly worded opinion, which stated, "The attorney general should confine his politicking to the stump and leave his bias out of the ballot statement that is supposed to be objective."

On October 1, medical marijuana patient and volunteer campaign spokesperson Val Hannah debated Lincoln County State's Attorney Tom Wollman on KELO-TV in Sioux Falls. On October 4, Hannah and medical marijuana researcher Dr. Greg Carter appeared on South Dakota Public Radio's "South Dakota Forum," which featured two opponents of the initiative in a separate segment.

On October 11, the *Yankton Press and Dakotan* editorialized in favor of the initiative, calling the measure "an act of compassion." Unfortunately, four South Dakota newspapers editorialized against the initiative, leading to its 48% to 52% defeat.

MPP in Print and on the Air

Nationally syndicated columnist Debra Saunders quoted MPP Communications Director Bruce Mirken in her June 25 column about the Hinchey-Rohrabacher amendment, which would stop federal raids of medical marijuana patients

who are complying with state laws. The *Oakland Tribune* also quoted Mirken in a June 29 story about the U.S. House's vote on the amendment. MPP's Aaron Houston discussed the legislation on "The Morning Show" on WWRL-AM in New York City on June 28.

Saunders mentioned MPP again on September 19, in a column about the September 13 medical marijuana debate between MPP's Rob Kampia, Ethan Nadelmann of the Drug Policy Alliance, and David Murray of the drug czar's office, which followed a screening of the documentary, *Waiting to Inhale*, in Washington, D.C.

The influential political magazine *National Journal* covered the debut of MPP's new radio ad on July 6. On October 7, the magazine examined the controversy surrounding the drug czar's anti-marijuana ads, the government-funded study that found the ads ineffective, and the White House office's decision to hide that study for 18 months. "The fact that they've known these ads backfire and still allowed the program to continue — while hiding this report from Congress and the public — makes the White House complicit in higher rates of drug use by children," said Houston in the article.

On October 6, Mirken appeared on CNBC's "On the Money" with David Krahl of the Drug Free America Foundation, debating the implications of new research showing that marijuana may prevent Alzheimer's disease.

John McCaslin's "Inside the Beltway" column in the *Washington Times* on October 11 quoted Mirken disputing the drug czar's claims that large numbers of teens are "dependent" on marijuana. "What Mr. Walters didn't mention is that the majority of these treatment admissions were referred by the criminal justice system — i.e., kids were arrested and offered treatment instead of jail," Mirken said. "We arrest people for smoking marijuana, force them into treatment, and then use those treatment admissions as 'proof' marijuana is dangerously addictive. Somewhere, George Orwell is smiling." **MPP**



MPP's Bruce Mirken discusses a recent study of THC on CNBC's "On the Money" on October 6.

State Legislative Briefs

California



A bill to increase the penalties for marijuana possession was defeated, thanks in part to letters from MPP members. S.B. 797, first introduced in 2005 by Sen. Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles), would have changed possession from a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$100 to an infraction with either a \$100 or a \$250 fine. (The bill was ambiguous on this point.) Subsequent offenses would have been punishable by \$250 fines, and prosecutors would be allowed to choose whether to charge defendants with misdemeanors or infractions.

While there are benefits to re-classifying marijuana offenses, the downside is that defendants charged with infractions —

unlike misdemeanors — don't have the right to a public defender or a jury trial. Also, the fines for marijuana possession would have more than doubled under S.B. 797. After the bill passed the Senate in May 2006 by a 22-14 vote, it was sent to the Assembly and was defeated by a 40-31 vote.

Michigan



In a surprise decision, the Michigan Supreme Court in June voted 4-3 to uphold a statute allowing the arrest and conviction of drivers with *any* trace amounts of marijuana metabolites in their systems. This decision means that completely sober people can be arrested and wrongly convicted of driving under the influence of drugs (DUID), even if they smoked marijuana weeks earlier or were exposed to it through

second-hand smoke.

In July, Rep. LaMar Lemmons (D-Detroit) introduced H.B. 6311, which would make the legal limit of THC and THC by-products five nanograms per milliliter of blood. The bill was introduced with the good intention of providing a standard above the zero tolerance law upheld by the state Supreme Court. Nonetheless, H.B. 6311 could still penalize sober drivers, as certain THC by-products mentioned in the bill are detectable for up to a month after using marijuana.

New Jersey



Two companion medical marijuana bills — S. 88 and A. 933 — are still pending in New Jersey. Introduced in January 2006, the bills were promptly referred to their chambers' respective health committees. S. 88 received a hearing in June, but legislators have not voted on the bill yet. The state legislature functions on two-year cycles, so the bills will be re-considered again in 2007. In addition to permitting medical marijuana for certain patients, the bills provide for a registry ID card system to protect patients from arrest.

New York



Despite intense lobbying efforts by MPP, the New York Legislature adjourned in June without enacting either of two bills permitting the doctor-advised use of medical marijuana. A Republican Senate bill — S.B. 5040 — was introduced by Vincent Leibell (R-Putnam County) but lost momentum in the face of inaccurate interpretations of the effect of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Gonzales v. Raich* in June 2005. Hopes were high as A. 8265 sailed through the Assembly Health Committee in May by an 18-6 vote, but no further action was then taken. Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan) and 43 others sponsored A. 8265. Supporters of the bills included Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau and Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno (R-Brunswick). **MPP**

MPP Attends National Conference of State Legislatures

At the annual National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in Nashville in August, MPP's state legislative staff educated dozens of state legislators about marijuana policy.

Easily noticeable among a sea of exhibitors at the three-day conference for state legislators and their staff was a booth with the big blue words "Marijuana Policy Project" above it. At a table flanked by colorful poster boards detailing the 11 states with effective medical marijuana laws and telling the stories of real-life patients who benefit from marijuana, MPP staff spoke with state legislators from across the country, many of whom support allowing seriously ill patients access to marijuana.

Several legislators suggested — without prompting by MPP — that marijuana should be taken out of the criminal market and regulated. Several others pledged to introduce

medical marijuana legislation in the near future.

MPP plans to capitalize on the experience and contacts gained at NCSL in its state-level efforts to reform marijuana policy. **MPP**



MPP Assistant Director of State Policies Karen O'Keefe gives out a copy of MPP's new "State-by-State Guide to Medical Marijuana Laws" report.

MPP screens *Waiting to Inhale*, debates White House

On September 13, MPP sponsored a debate between leading drug policy reformers and a government prohibitionist, following a screening of the medical marijuana documentary *Waiting to Inhale* at a downtown theater in Washington, D.C.

MPP Executive Director Rob Kambia and Drug Policy Alliance Executive Director Ethan Nadelmann squared off against David Murray, who is the special assistant to White House Drug Czar John Walters. (Murray is interviewed in the documentary.) Andrea Barthwell, a former deputy director of the drug czar's office, was also scheduled to participate in the debate but withdrew at the last minute.

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner and nationally syndicated columnist Clarence Page moderated the debate, which began with each participant responding

to the film. Murray complained that the filmmaker had made the prohibitionists in the documentary look like "cartoon characters." In addition, Murray focused his critique on the supposed dangers posed by medical marijuana via the "gateway theory." The high point of the debate occurred when Kambia reminded the participants and the audience what was really at stake — the arrest and jailing of seriously ill patients — by pulling out a pair of handcuffs.

By all accounts, Kambia and Nadelmann decisively won the debate.

Approximately 150 people attended the screening. The film's producer and director, Jed Riffe, was on hand to introduce the film and field questions.

The documentary, subtitled *Marijuana, Medicine and the Law*, examines the lives of several medical marijuana

patients, as well as the positions of those who would keep medical marijuana illegal. (A DVD of the film is available to MPP members with a donation of \$40 — or a monthly pledge of \$5. Visit www.mpp.org/donate to obtain a copy.) **MPP**



Waiting to Inhale director and producer Jed Riffe and editor Maureen Gosling attend the MPP-sponsored screening of the film in D.C. this fall.

MPP Launches Radio Ads

In July, MPP began a partnership with national radio personality Jim Hightower to air radio ads on his syndicated "Common Sense Commentaries."

The first spot, which aired in July on 141 stations nationwide, listed prominent officials who have used marijuana and asked, "Is it fair to arrest three quarters of a million people a year for doing what presidents and a Supreme Court justice have done?" The second ad, which aired in September on the same stations, debunked marijuana myths — pointing out, for example, that government-funded research has shown that marijuana does not cause cancer. It concluded, "The more research the government conducts, the more they undermine their own war on marijuana users."



The third ad began playing on the program's stations in November. Charging the federal government with taking anti-terrorism funds away from target cities like Washington, D.C., and New York City while using federal tax dollars to arrest and prosecute patients using medical marijuana legally under state law, the ad asked, "A war on terrorists ... or a war on medical patients?"

The ads themselves, because of their provocative content, have garnered media attention: They have been covered by CNN Radio, the *New York Daily News*, and influential blogs such as TalkLeft, Hammer of Truth, and CommonDreams.

Visit www.mpp.org/psas to listen to the ads. **MPP**

Brazil's Drug Users Will Get Help, Not Jail



On the continent that produces most of the world's cocaine and much of its heroin and marijuana, its largest country is softening punishment on recreational drug users.

In September, Brazilian President Luis Inacio da Silva signed a bill creating a new drug law in South America's most populous nation. Under the new law, drug users and possessors will not be arrested and jailed, but instead given citations and offered rehabilitation and community service.

The new law marks an important shift in Brazilian drug policy, with drug users now being officially viewed not as criminals, but as people in need of medical and psychological help.

"A drug user is not a case for the police, he's a drug addict," said Elias Murad, the congressman who sponsored the bill. "He's more of a medical and social problem than a police problem, and that's the way thinking is going these days, not just here in Brazil but the world over. We believe that you can't send someone who is ill to jail."

The new legislation makes Brazil the first major South American country to lessen the penalties for minor drug possession and follows the trend in Europe where a host of nations — including Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and Britain — have already done so.

Although regional experts say Brazil's decision is unlikely to spur similar changes in other Latin American nations — partly because the United States is so opposed to such measures — Brazilian officials are celebrating what they say is a humane and commonsense response to a problem that refuses to go away. **MPP**

Auction Items Needed

Do you own artwork, sports memorabilia, a vacation home, collectibles, or a business that could provide free services to MPP?

Support MPP by donating these items and services to our upcoming online auction to raise funds for our important work. You can take a tax deduction for the fair market value of goods and/or services you donate. MPP will also auction off the most exclusive items at our upcoming party at the Playboy Mansion.



For more information or to make a donation, please call (202) 462-4747, ext. 132, or e-mail membership@mpp.org.

PLANNED GIVING

By leaving a bequest to MPP in your will, you can support MPP's work far into the future. Your bequest can be a fixed amount or a percentage of your estate. Visit www.mpp.org/giving to secure better marijuana policy for generations to come.

◆ STOCK TRANSFERS ◆

The gift of appreciated securities — stocks, bonds, or mutual funds that have grown in value — can be an easy way of making a contribution to MPP, and one which may have tax advantages for you. You might even be able to consider a larger gift than you would have otherwise given — the size you wish you could make!

If you transfer long-term held stock to a 501(c)(3) charitable organization such as MPP Foundation (rather than selling the stock and giving the cash), you do not have to pay the capital gains tax on the appreciated value of the stock **and** you can take a charitable deduction for the full current value of the stock. Visit www.mpp.org/giving for details about donating for a double tax benefit.



iGive.com®
Change online shopping for good.

When you shop at major online retailers, such as amazon.com, gap.com, and many others, you can have a portion of the cost of your purchase automatically donated to MPP — without adding to your cost! To get started, simply register with www.iGive.com and enter MPP as your cause (cause ID = 2564). Then, shop with any of the hundreds of merchants participating with www.iGive.com and a portion of the purchase price will be sent to MPP.

MPP recently joined eBay's Giving Works program, which distributes money from eBay sales to nonprofit causes. Visit www.ebay.com and click on "Sell" to get started. Then be sure to select "Marijuana Policy Project" when you're prompted to enter a charity. (Donations made to MPP in this manner are tax-deductible.)



IRA DONATIONS

A new federal law allows tax-free charitable gifts from traditional and Roth Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). If you are 70½ or older, you can distribute up to \$100,000 this year and next, and the withdrawal will not be subject to federal income tax. Visit www.mpp.org/giving for more information about this new opportunity.

MPP

Party at the Playboy Mansion

Party with MPP at the Playboy Mansion

Join us at MPP's party at the Playboy Mansion on May 14, 2007. The best ticket price is available **now**, as prices will increase as more tickets are sold. MPP's party at the Playboy Mansion in March 2006 sold out quickly, so reserve your tickets today!

For event details and to purchase tickets, visit www.mpp.org/playboy or call (202) 462-5747, ext. 132.

Become an MPP monthly pledger!

Monthly pledgers provide the reliable, core support that MPP counts on as we work to end marijuana prohibition nationwide. When you join MPP's monthly pledge program at a level of just \$5 or more per month, you will receive your choice of MPP's colorful "Stop Arresting Patients" t-shirt, a DVD of the award-winning medical marijuana documentary *Waiting to Inhale*, or a VHS tape or DVD of *BUSTED: The Citizen's Guide to Surviving Police Encounters*. Visit www.mpp.org/pledge today!

