

Testimony in **Opposition** to SB-0708, March 2021

Submission by:

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Editor: Cannabis in Medicine: An Evidence-Based Approach

<https://www.amazon.com/Cannabis-Medicine-Evidence-Based-Kenneth-Finn/dp/3030459675>

Board Certified, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Board Certified, Pain Medicine
Board Certified, Pain Management

President, American Board of Pain Medicine (2021)
Member, American Board of Pain Medicine, Exam Council (2001-present)
Member, Colorado Governor's Task Force on Amendment 64, Consumer Safety and Social Issues Work Group
Member, Colorado Medical Marijuana Scientific Advisory Council

Expansion of marijuana programs has failed every single public health and safety metric

1. Expanded marijuana programs will not improve the state or national drug crisis.

2020 was yet another year with over 81,000 people nationally dying from drug overdoses

Colorado has had medical marijuana for 20 years, 90% of medical marijuana recommendations are for pain, and 2020 was a record number of drug overdoses, including prescription opioids

Maryland overdoses are not improving over time (see attached graphic)

https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Overdose/2020_Q1_Drug_Intox_Report.pdf

Since legalization in Colorado (2014) drug overdoses have skyrocketed

Prescription opioid deaths:	increased 90%
Fentanyl deaths:	increased 690%
Methamphetamine deaths:	increased 280%
Cocaine deaths:	increased 160%
Heroin deaths:	increased 15%

2. **Marijuana is the most prevalent substance found in completed teen suicide in Colorado**

https://cohealthviz.dphe.state.co.us/t/HSEBPublic/views/CoVDRS_12_1_17/Story1?:embed=y&:showAppBanner=false&:showShareOptions=true&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no#4

3. **Marijuana-related driving fatalities have been increasing, far faster than population growth, since legalization**

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/article-abstract/2767647>

4. **The black market in Colorado has worsened since legalization**

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-colorados-marijuana-legalization-strengthened-the-drugs-black-market>

5. **Marijuana is not profitable, just like alcohol, tobacco, and opioids. For every dollar generated, it costs \$4.50 to regulate**

<https://centennial.ccu.edu/policy-briefs/marijuana-costs/>

6. **Currently “regulated” markets are failing**

<https://sos.oregon.gov/audits/Documents/2019-04.pdf>

7. **Increased health care utilization and health care costs**

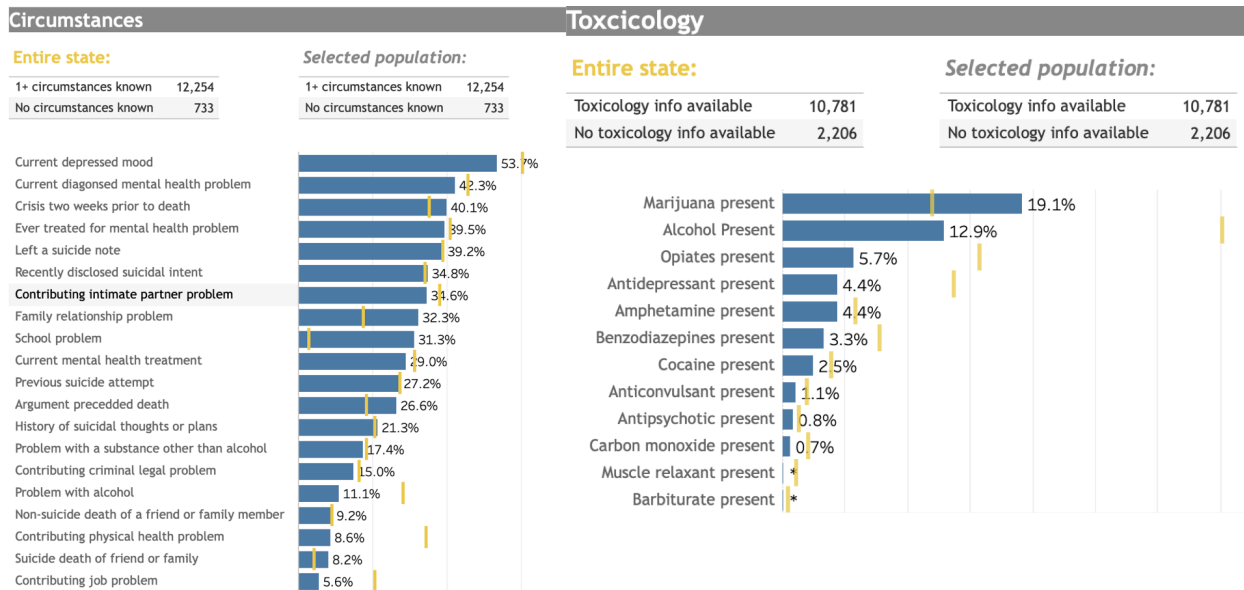
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314140400_The_Hidden_Costs_of_Marijuana_Use_in_Colorado_One_Emergency_Department%27s_Experience

8. **Increased homelessness, increased crime, decreased property values**

9. Negative environmental impacts



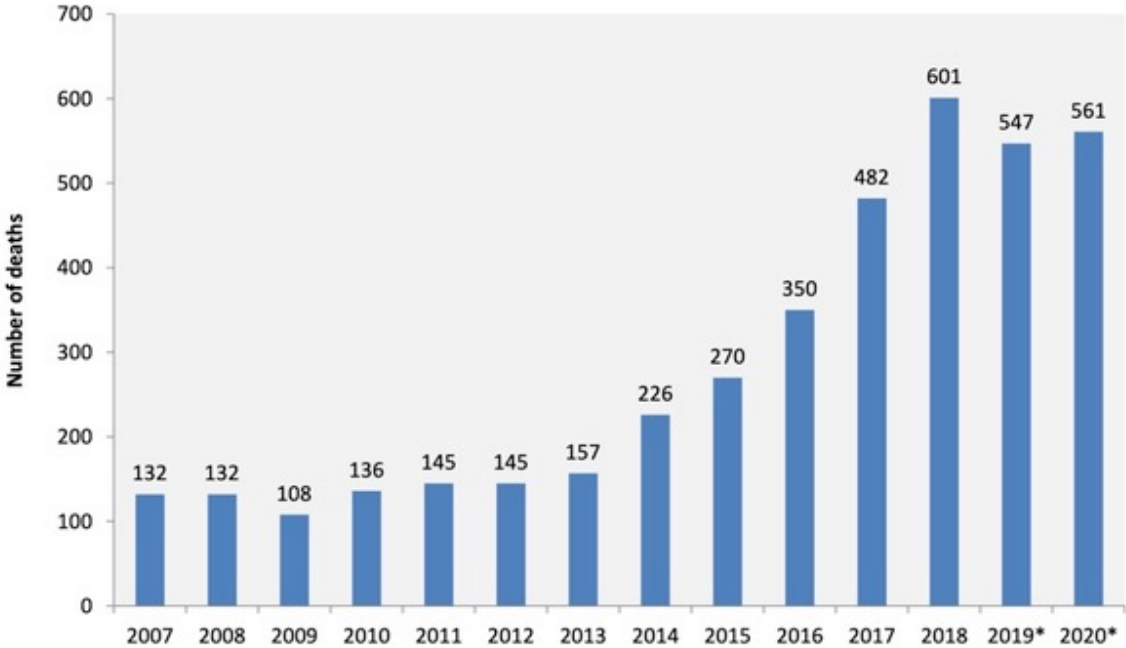
There are more harms but not enough time to discuss
Need to evaluate profit and loss before putting to the public consideration



Trend **began 2012** and has **remained #1** since then

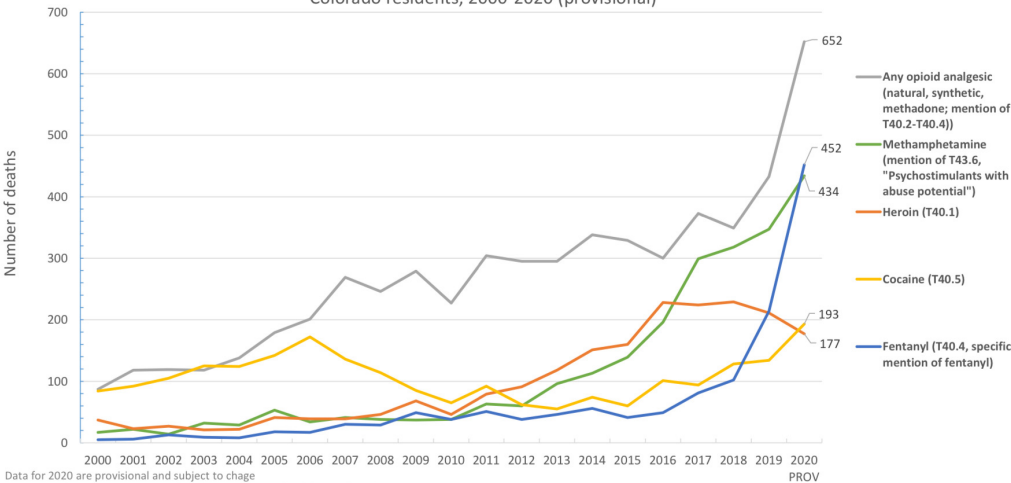
There is currently no data on improved public health metrics related to expanded marijuana programs

Figure 2. Number of Opioid-Related Deaths Occurring in Maryland from January through March of Each Year.*



*2019, 2020 counts are preliminary.

Number of drug overdose deaths by substances mentioned:
Colorado residents, 2000-2020 (provisional)



Data for 2020 are provisional and subject to change
Source: Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment