

**Opposition to HB0032:**  
Cannabis legalization and  
regulation,  
2021

**Dr. Karen Randall, DO FAAEM**  
Parkview Medical Center  
Emergency Department  
400 W 16th St, Pueblo, CO 81003  
karenrandall1545@me.com

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

It is extremely important that the committee understand all the ramifications and harms to individuals/children and our communities with regards to the sale of high potency cannabis. **I do not get paid for speaking about the harms.** I am a practicing emergency medicine physician in Southern Colorado. I have seen, on a daily basis, new, worsening, and concerning findings related to cannabis use. Colorado has had legal cannabis for sale for the last 8 years. The medical community has published hundreds, if not thousands, of studies with regards to the harms of high potency cannabis over the last decade. More articles, case reports and studies are coming every month. I have not read a single peer reviewed medical study that indicates use/benefit/treatment for the high potency products - dab, wax, shatter. Quite the opposite, more and more harms are being described. Medical harms and costs will out strip any revenue that a state will make from taxes. In order to keep the taxes “coming in” you will have to have a significant population of chronic users (also known as addicts). In this day and age, rehab and drug treatment programs are drastically decreasing (due to funding) and yet, we are creating more addicts. Addiction is a very costly diagnosis.

The cannabis-related health impacts I see on a daily basis range from cannabis-induced psychotic breaks to the cannabis-induced hyperemesis syndrome (which can be fatal by the way) to children who have been overcome by potent THC products, often presenting with impaired mental, cardiac and respiratory function. **These admissions detract from our ability to give timely care to others.**

Here is just one recent example: I had 2 young girls (12 & 14) present to the ED in an altered



state. It was determined that they had connected via social media to buy a single cannabis candy that contained **500 mg of THC**. By their report, they bought it from a declared cannabis dispensary owner. Although children often obtain marijuana products in their home or from older friends, there are also more and more reports about children using the internet/social

media to get drugs. All kinds of new social networks have been established for kids to get cannabis/drugs locally. In this case, they each consumed half of the candy bar. You can see the picture of the candy wrapper above.

We know that there are increasing harms to children as they use more and use at a younger age. The most recent Healthy Kids survey shows that Colorado’s children are using more product at a younger age. Sadly, they are starting with the high potency products - dab, wax,

shatter, etc. as it is easier to conceal and very available. <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/healthy-kids-colorado-survey-data-tables-and-reports>

Not only are we harming the current generation, clear harms to the future generation are becoming apparent. NIDA has a study that follows children from across the nation. They are following almost 12 thousand children. This is a long term study that was recently started. They have found that if a mother uses cannabis while pregnant, their offspring have increased issues with social and emotional development: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/adolescent-brain/longitudinal-study-adolescent-brain-cognitive-development-abcd-study> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/article-abstract/2770964>

Please contact me for further information. I am happy to supply information with regards to the harms being done. I am certified in cannabis science and medicine through the University of Vermont. I have published several articles and chapters with regards to clinical findings associated with cannabis use. I also have long term data in our community that shows an increase in multiple drugs, including cannabis (data set included).

I look forward to answering your questions,

Dr. Karen Randall, FAAEM, Residency trained in Emergency Medicine, Pediatrics, and Family Practice  
Certified Cannabis Science and Medicine, University of Vermont  
VP of Case Management, SCEMA  
Board of Directors, SCEMA