



# THE TORCH

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## 5 Reasons Marijuana Should Remain Illegal

Condensed from an article by **John Hawkins**, Townhall.com, 1/21/14

**H**ow did we end up in a world where Big Gulps are being banned in New York while the welcome mat for potheads is being rolled out in Colorado? How is it that cigarette smokers are pariahs, while people smoking weed are being cheered? This is despite the fact that potheads are almost universally recognized as unmotivated, low class, degenerate—and, yes, smelly failures.

Moreover, we all recognize that smoking is

a dirty habit that makes you die younger while drinking is a potentially dangerous habit that leads to hundreds of thousands of deaths per year, but we want to condone pot use on top of that? There's a reason pot was made illegal in the first place and, quite frankly, the only reason alcohol and cigarettes are legal is because they're so deeply ingrained in our society that we can't get rid of them.

There is certainly a financial and human cost to keeping marijuana illegal and we can

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see it in our prisons. But, there would be an even larger cost to making it legal.

**1) It's extremely addictive for some people:** If you don't want to take my word for it, listen to Dr. Drew Pinsky, who has been working with addicts for decades.

"I've been treating cannabis addiction for 20 years. When people are addicted to cannabis, cocaine, and alcohol, the drug they have the most difficult time giving up is the cannabis. It is extremely addictive ... for some people. I think that's where people get confused. It's not very addictive for many people. It's a small subset of people with a genetic potential for addiction. But for them it is really tough."

**2) This experiment hasn't worked out so well for Amsterdam:** Humans being what they are, just about any stupid idea we can come up with has already been tried somewhere else. Amsterdam is the most famous place across the world that has effectively legalized pot. It has even turned into a tourist destination for potheads. Legalizing weed has been a huge success there, right? Actually, not so much...

Amsterdam became the first city in the Netherlands to ban students from smoking marijuana at school. The city's mayor introduced the law after school chiefs complained about pupils turning up to classes high after rolling up outside the grounds. Additionally, contrary to the claims that legalizing it will reduce crime, in Amsterdam it's been found that crime is now centering around the coffeehouses where marijuana is sold. That doesn't exactly sound like a success story, does it?

**3) Marijuana is terrible for your mental health:** Marijuana may even be *worse* than cigarettes. At least cigarettes don't peel points off of your IQ.

A Northwestern University study found that marijuana users have abnormal brain structure and poor memory, and that chronic marijuana abuse may lead to brain changes resembling schizophrenia. The study also reported that the younger the person starts using marijuana, the worse the effects become.

In its own report arguing against marijuana legalization, the American Medical Association said, "Heavy cannabis use in adolescence causes persistent impairments in neurocognitive performance and IQ, and use is associated with increased rates of anxiety, mood, and psychotic thought disorders."

So, there's a good reason most habitual marijuana users come off as stupid. The drug is making them stupider, even when they're not high. *You really want your kids on that?*

**4) Marijuana is terrible for your physical health:** How bad is marijuana for you? It's even more toxic than cigarette smoke. Regular users are hit with devastating lung problems as much as 20 years earlier than smokers. Even small amounts of marijuana can cause temporary sterility, and it has a terrible impact on the babies of women who smoke, including, "birth defects, mental abnormalities, and increased risk of leukemia in children." If your standard is, "Well, it's better for you than Meth or Crack,"

that's true, but you're deluding yourself if you think pot is anything other than absolutely horrible for your health.

**5) The drug decimates many people's lives:** Movies portray potheads as harmless, fun-loving people who spend their time giggling and munching Cheetos, but they don't show these people when they're flunking out of school, losing their jobs, frustrated because they can't concentrate, or losing the love of their lives because they just don't want to be with a pot-smoking loser anymore. Even in the limited number of studies, the numbers are stark.

A study of 129 college students found that, among those who smoked the drug at least twenty-seven of the thirty days before being surveyed, critical skills related to attention, memory, and learning were seriously diminished. A study of postal workers found that employees who tested positive for marijuana had 55 percent more accidents, 85 percent more injuries, and a 75 percent increase in being absent from work. In Australia, a study found that cannabis intoxication was responsible for 4.3 percent of driver fatalities.

Students who use marijuana have lower grades and are less likely to get into college than nonsmokers. They simply do not have the same abilities to remember and organize information compared to those who do not use these substances.

It's bad enough that we already lose so many Americans to cigarettes, alcoholism, and drunken driving. Do we really want to endorse the loss of millions more potentially productive Americans via marijuana? Do we move on from there to crack, heroin or meth? Some people would say, "If they want to do it, great, then it's no business of ours." But, you can also bet that those same people will be complaining about all the junkies and welfare cases that will be created by the policy they endorsed.

So, ask yourself a few key questions. **Is legalizing marijuana going to make this a better country or a worse one? Would you want to live in a neighborhood filled with people who regularly smoke marijuana? Would you want your kids regularly smoking pot?**

Now is the time to think about it because, although it's easy to thoughtlessly legalize a drug like marijuana, when things go predictably wrong down the road, it will be a lot harder to put the genie back in the bottle than people seem to think.

NOTE: Eight states, plus Washington, D.C., have legalized the recreational use of marijuana, empowering a new, for-profit industry targeting kids with a dangerous and addictive product. Much like the tobacco industry, "Big Marijuana" will pull out all the stops to grow its bottom line—as well as its political influence—in these states, with potentially detrimental side effects. In 2015, Texas passed the Texas Compassionate Use Act, allowing marijuana for medicinal purposes, and the first medical marijuana dispensary opened just last month in Manchaca, 12 miles outside of Austin. Legalization for recreational use will come up in the 2019 Legislative Session; TEF will oppose it. For more information, go to Smart Approaches To Marijuana ([learnaboutsam.org](http://learnaboutsam.org)).

# Businesses, Bathrooms and Bermuda

By **Tony Perkins**, Family Research Council, 2/9/18

Liberals can be like weathermen: they make a lot of predictions that never come true. But at least meteorologists are forecasting in good faith—studying facts and patterns and trends. The Left, on the other hand, will prophesy doom without a scrap of evidence on its side. And the bathroom debate is Exhibit A.

For more than a year and a half, Americans heard about the coming cataclysm for states that defended privacy. Headlines about financial ruin covered the front pages of states like North Carolina and Texas, where leaders were battling to keep men out of girls' restrooms, changing rooms, and showers. At one point, a group called the Texas Association of Business claimed that the Lone Star state would lose a whopping \$8.5 billion in GDP and 185,000 jobs if it passed the measure that a majority of Texans wanted. The goal was to get people to think twice about the bill. And it worked—until fact checkers got involved.

Turns out, the figures were completely bogus. Things started to smell fishy when the authors wouldn't talk to PolitiFact. Then there was the matter of the missing citations. More than once, investigators said, "The study footnotes [a figure] to a web link that doesn't work." Still, the association claimed, "Given that the Texas travel industry has a \$31 billion annual impact, a 15 percent reduction would result in an overall loss of \$8.5 billion," the study says, "or 0.5 percent of the state GDP." When the projection wasn't sourced, PolitiFact dug deeper and found a huge discrepancy. Turns out, "the '15 percent' reduction was a typo that should have said '.5 percent,' as the study states otherwise." The result? PolitiFact rated the claim Mostly False.

Now, almost a year later, there's a lot more than just PolitiFact debunking the Left's lies. *Forbes* is finishing the job other experts started in its latest Top States for Business report. Guess where Texas finished? Number two, the state's best showing since 2006. And North Carolina—ground zero in the bathroom wars? Number one—a spot above its last two years. So much for privacy debates being bad for business! In fact, of the top 10 states, only *one* (Colorado) has the radical sexual orientation, gender identity (SOGI) law liberals are fighting for. So much for SOGIs and religious discrimination being essential to economic success.

Of course, there's other evidence too. In Houston last year, where voters overwhelmingly repealed the city's bathroom bill, the NFL had one of its most prosperous Super Bowl showings to date. Tourism will slump, liberals argued. Revenue will sag. Instead, the game helped Space City to astronomical earnings.



And in North Carolina, where the NBA and NCAA instantly regretted pulling key games from the state, business is booming. Despite the Left's prognostications, more companies are running to the state than away from it.

Unfortunately for the Left, the marketplace isn't the only place they're losing ground. People here (and around the world) are starting to see the consequences of redefining marriage and creating new gender norms. In Bermuda, the legislature just toppled the British territory's same-sex marriage law less than a year after the court ordered it. The island did what no other nation has: rolled back same-sex marriage in exchange for domestic partnerships. Minister Walter Brown pointed to the swell of opposition for the court's ruling, saying the Act "strike[s] a fair balance between two currently irreconcilable groups in Bermuda, by restating that marriage must be between a male and a female, while at the same time recognizing and protecting the rights of same-sex couples." It's also in keeping with local sentiment. Two years ago, Bermudans voted 2:1 to outlaw same-sex marriage and civil unions.

Here at home, the tide continues to turn. Attitudes are subtly shifting since Donald Trump made it okay to talk openly about social issues again. The White House certainly hasn't been shy about calling the Left's absurdity what it is. And that may also be reflected in the latest surveys. Americans are starting to voice their concerns about the saturation of the LGBT agenda in schools, the medical profession, and public. The Harris Poll sent shockwaves through the radical Left when it found that Americans were actually more uncomfortable with the in-your-face behavior of people who identify as gay or transgender than before. In other words, the acceptance for that agenda isn't actually growing, they fear, but regressing in a post-Obergefell world.

Then, in another encouraging sign of the changes taking place, Colorado's Joint Budget Committee took the bold step of defunding the state's Civil Rights Commission—the same radical bureaucrats who targeted Christian baker Jack Phillips for turning down a same-sex wedding cake order. These so-called "civil rights" agencies have been one of the Left's biggest weapons in the crusade against religious liberty. For years, they've used these commissions as a club to punish Christian conservatives for living out their beliefs on issues like marriage. We congratulate our friends at Colorado Family Action for taking the teeth out of what's become nothing more than a taxpayer-funded extension of the radical Human Rights Campaign.

## TEF Mourns the Passing of Founder LaNeil Wright Spivy

The founder of Texas Eagle Forum and Dallas Eagle Forum, LaNeil Wright Spivy, passed away January 31, 2018, at the age of 92. In 1977, LaNeil joined Phyllis Schlafly in the fight to stop the Equal Rights Amendment. That year, Democratic congresswoman Bella Abzug held a huge pro-ERA rally at the Astrodome in Houston. LaNeil felt the Lord directing her to book the 18,000-seat Astro Arena, which she and a friend did, never dreaming that over 20,000 women from all across the nation would fill the arena to counter the feminists!



That was the turning point for the defeat of ERA, and as a result, LaNeil became a leader in the conservative movement in Texas. “She was a woman of style, grace, and, most importantly, prayer,” said TEF President Trayce Bradford. “There is no way to share all she has done and what she has meant to so many during her decades in Eagle Forum. She will be dearly missed.”

## Border Wall Concerns Environmentalists

It’s okay to weaponize environmental regulations to restrict land use by farmers and ranchers, even seize property... but build a wall along the border to protect Americans from the influx of criminal aliens and, all of a sudden, the government is infringing on property rights. Included in the mixed-up argument being made against the Trump Administration is the claim made by groups such as the Center for Biological Diversity that “natural migration of people and wildlife” will be interrupted. Here’s a clue for environmental activists: borders serve the practical purpose of restricting entry of citizens from another country for reasons of national security. Believe it or not, impeding the “flow” of wildlife comes under the same heading since animals are bearers of pestilence that can infect the native wildlife population, just as immigrants carrying tuberculosis or other virulent diseases endanger lives. The difference here is that the environment does not have rights equal to or above that of individuals. Landscape, flora and fauna are not sentient beings and, thus, cannot have individual rights. Organizations like the Natural Resources Defense Council make a show of “defending” their “rights” for one purpose only: to control, undermine, and deny the real rights of individuals.

SOURCE: A. Dru Kristenev, “Border Wall: NOW Libs are concerned about property rights,” Canada Free Press, 2/12/18

## Liberals Demand Ballot Security

Finally! After years of mocking conservatives and fighting voter ID laws tooth-and-nail, progressives are now demanding strict reforms to improve ballot security. But you won’t believe what they have in mind. The left-wing think tank Center for American Progress (CAP), which has deep ties to Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, released a report titled, “Election Security in All 50 States.” Among its recommendations is a ban on overseas electronic ballots. CAP insists that all ballots “be returned by mail or delivered in person.” Guess who provides a big percentage of overseas ballots? U.S. military personnel. The left is eager to allow convicted felons to vote. It is constantly fighting to eliminate all kinds of prudent voting requirements. The left insists that it is too much to ask that someone show an ID to vote, but it is all-in on making it harder for our men and women in uniform to cast their ballots. If Russian hacking of our elections and possible manipulation of voter databases is such a big concern, that only increases the need for voter ID laws. I am all for measures to crackdown on voter fraud, but not at the expense of our brave men and women who guarantee our right to vote.

SOURCE: Gary Bauer, End of Day Report, 2/15/18

### Quote of the Month

*“Feminism, in whatever form it lands in our laps today, has never been about empowering women. Its purpose is to elevate victims, to use them to sell feminists’ bogus narrative.”*

~ Anne Schlafly Cori, Eagle Forum president, “How Feminism Takes Away Women’s Power To Say ‘No’ To Predators,” 1/30/18

### Great American Quote

*“If the freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led away like sheep to the slaughter.”*

~ George Washington

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