

FLORENCE COUNTY RESOLUTION # 2019-10

Introduced By: Human Services

Intent: Opposition to the Legalization of Marijuana in the State of Wisconsin

WHEREAS, legalizing marijuana for adults normalizes the use of this brain-altering substance, leading to greater exposure via ambient smoke to children from infants through teenagers and access to the substance by teenagers for experimentation, casual use and chronic use; and

WHEREAS, developing brains, especially those of babies in utero, children and teenagers are especially susceptible the harmful effects of marijuana including a reduction in attention, memory, learning function and behavior problems; and

WHEREAS, occasional use of marijuana caused altered senses and sense of time, changes in mood, impaired body movement, impaired memory and difficulty with thinking and problem solving; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports evidence from multiple studies linking heavy marijuana use to memory damage, learning, and attention, and an increased risk of anxiety, depression and schizophrenia, further straining schools and mental health systems; and

WHEREAS, marijuana negatively affects skills needed for safe driving and is the drug most often found in the blood of drivers involved in crashes; and

WHEREAS, since Colorado legalized marijuana it has recorded a substantial increase in marijuana-related traffic deaths as well as drivers who tested positive for marijuana in non-fatal crashes; and

WHEREAS, national experience with other legal adult substances such as alcohol, tobacco and vaping has led to youth access, experimentation, some chronic use and infiltration into America's high schools, causing multiple, costly consequences related to discipline and mental health; and

WHEREAS, marijuana has been identified as a gateway drug and use by teenagers does not promote a safe, efficient school learning environment for all students, meaning school counselors and teachers are challenged to overcome side-effects on users mood, behavior, motivation and memory; and

WHEREAS, adolescent and young adult marijuana use is negatively correlated with high school and post-secondary educational attainment; and

WHEREAS, legal marijuana substantially increases the risk of impairment for those working in the manufacturing, construction, agriculture and other business sectors, as evidenced by data showing employees who test positive for marijuana use had 55% more industrial

accidents, 85% more injuries and 75% greater absenteeism compared to those who tested negative; and

WHEREAS, retail business establishments identify concerns with verbal and physical altercations involving substance users that can negatively impact business and revenue; and

WHEREAS, states with legalized marijuana have experienced an increase in unintended consequences including increases in motor vehicle crash rates, increases in marijuana addiction among youth and people of color, environmental issues, accidental childhood poisonings from ingesting edibles and increase in criminal behavior including organized crime.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Florence County Board of Supervisors does hereby oppose the legalization of marijuana in the State of Wisconsin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florence County Board of Supervisors urges the State of Wisconsin to closely review the statistics and other data available surrounding marijuana use so that Wisconsin can remain a safe and healthy State for residents and visitors to enjoy recreational activities, support families and drug-free homes, attract entrepreneurs, provide for the future of our State, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Tony Evers, Department of Children and Families Secretary Emillie Amundson, Department of Health Services Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm, area legislators, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF FLORENCE COUNTY THIS 19TH DAY OF MARCH 2019


DONNA TRUDELL, COUNTY CLERK


JEANETTE BOMBERG, COUNTY BOARD CHAIRPERSON