

Urban Oregon legalized marijuana, rural Oregon paying the price



By Shirley Morgan

As the founder of the Citizens for Public Safety, Quality of Life, and Property Values a national volunteer outreach with a focus on the impacts of marijuana in our communities, I want to convey loud and clear that the decision by Oregon's legislature to redefine marijuana as an agricultural crop should not be ignored! It should not be ignored because it means that marijuana advocates and pro marijuana legislators are outright trying to takeover Oregon's rural farming communities for the sole purpose of growing recreational marijuana. They have done this by redefining marijuana as an agricultural crop in House Bill 3400.

This opinion will review the:

1. Funding of the legalization movement
2. Foundational setting up of the medical marijuana program as a bridge to marijuana legalization
3. Redefinition immunity loophole of marijuana as an agricultural farm crop which has led to thousands of international cartels taking over Oregon's farm land

Funding of the legalization movement

First, recreational marijuana was legalized in Oregon in 2014 under a statutory ballot measure that was funded by \$5.3 million dollars of out-of-state campaign money in addition to in-kind funding which increased the campaign total to over \$9.3 million.

Marijuana lobbyists and pro marijuana legislators waited with bated breath to see if polling guidelines around the public's acceptance of a **tax and regulate** scheme would pass. It did with a 55.6% yes and a 44.4% no! It is important to note that it was urban voters who said yes and rural voters who said no, yet it is the rural voters who are paying the price with thousands of illegal international cartels who are taking over Oregon's farm land, along with hundreds of licensed growers who have violated Oregon's recreational marijuana law.

Pro marijuana advocates of measure 91 blasted the airwaves with their message knowing full well that local efforts would have a difficult time matching their out-of-state funds, since all of their money was coming from billionaires whose dream is to legalize all illegal drugs. They bought marijuana legalization in Oregon with a **tax and regulate message**, leaving out the truthful message that large commercial recreational marijuana grows would be setting up large stinky grows in the once beautiful pasture next to your rural farming homes, ruining your public safety, quality of life, and property values.

7 years of evidence have revealed that marijuana legalization has been a failure. Since May of 2021 Oregon law enforcement agencies have confiscated over:

- **1,998,478 known** illegal marijuana plants
- in **hundreds of greenhouses**, and
- over **596,546 lbs./298 tons of processed marijuana**
- in **17 of Oregon's 36 Counties** with two of those counties requesting a state of emergency, (*Klamath, Douglas-REQUEST FOR STATE OF EMERGENCY, Jackson-REQUEST FOR STATE OF EMERGENCY, Josephine-COMMISSIONERS DISCUSSING A REQUEST FOR A STATE OF EMERGENCY, Multnomah, Union, Deschutes, Linn, Lane, Washington, Curry, Benton, Marion, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Polk*), exceeding a total estimated street cost of \$2.7 billion.

Jan. 22, 2022

Pot busts in Southern Oregon exceed **\$2.7 billion 1,793,029 plants, 988,768 lbs. processed**

<https://www.mailtribune.com/top-stories/2022/01/22/pot-busts-in-southern-oregon-exceed-2-7-billion/>

Foundational setting up of the medical marijuana program as a bridge to complete marijuana legalization

Second, Oregon legalized medical marijuana in 1998 and according to the Oregon Health Authority there were over 47,430 unregulated medical marijuana growers growing for cardholders when Oregon voters were asked to legalize recreational marijuana in 2014. The Oregon Liquor License Commission who has been tasked to set up rules for Oregon's new recreational marijuana program have indicated that at least 75% of the medical marijuana in Oregon goes to underage and to the national and international black-market. Knowing this, legislators went to work to find ways to control Oregon's medical marijuana program by reducing:

1. the number of cardholders that medical marijuana growers could grow for
2. the number of marijuana plants that could be grown at one site address

2016 Weed Documentary <https://vimeo.com/208647445>

They knew that if they couldn't reduce these quantities, then Oregon's new recreational marijuana would have a difficult time surviving.

Though this looked admirable on behalf of our legislators the medical marijuana program from the beginning was the tool that was used by the pro marijuana advocates to set the foundational bridge for outright marijuana legalization.

Redefinition immunity loophole of marijuana as an agricultural farm crop which has led to thousands of international cartels taking over Oregon's farm land

Third, once legislators realized that legalization was only going to succeed if they were able to curtail the current unregulated medical marijuana program by implementing a marijuana plant grower reduction program, they then opened the door to the growers by developing what they called a volunteer Opt-In program for growers where they could sell their extra marijuana to the licensed recreational marijuana market hoping to keep it out of the black market. However, there was not a required mandate for the 47,430 unregulated marijuana grow sites to become part of this program therefore leaving another unregulated loophole which allowed many of the medical marijuana growers to continue their illegal black-market sales.

Finally, Oregon legislators decided to redefine marijuana as an agricultural farm crop under House Bill 3400 (section 34 (1), which gives recreational marijuana grows an immunity loophole in all of Oregon's exclusive farm use areas under the States "Right to Farm Act", which denies nuisance lawsuits against farmers who use accepted and standard farming practices. It also does not require neighbor notification. It allows only the State to regulate it without much local jurisdiction control, unless local jurisdictions Opted-Out of allowing recreational marijuana in their community through some authority in HB3400 or they could Opt-In and develop a time, place and manner ordinance, as marijuana is still a federally illegal drug. 16 of Oregon's 36 counties opted-out of allowing recreational marijuana in their communities.

So, what did this mean for Oregon's rural farming residents? Measure 91 had no limitations on who could own marijuana licenses; this meant that out-of-state and country residents could be a (producer, processor, wholesaler, and/or retailer) and own unlimited licenses in any category, all of which was an open invitation for illicit drug cartels. It also meant an utter takeover of all of Oregon's rural farming lands, bringing such impacts as stinky skunk odors, 1000% increase in traffic, illegal water usage, increased crime, animal abuse, human trafficking, access by youth, shootings, burglaries, destruction of wildlife and the environment, and unfriendly bully behaviors.

Imagine, one day you have a 40 -acre pasture next to your home and the next day it has been turned into a 300' x 700' compound completely surrounded by a 6' high fence with 10 rows of barbed wire on the top blocking your once beautiful view, security cameras on all sides, hundreds of 24-hours a day-lighted greenhouses that light up the night sky for miles, changing the rural farming character and culture that you have once enjoyed.

62870 Johnson Ranch Rd-Bend, Oregon

Below was the beautiful view

300' x 700' compound now blocking the view



The utter takeover of Oregon's rural farming communities through the redefinition of marijuana as an agricultural farm crop is inflaming rural Oregon voters. Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission issues more than one recreational marijuana growing license to one site address, therefore allowing farmland to be industrialized by greedy buyers who want to set up agricultural buildings and then rent them to commercial marijuana growers. There is one 20-acre property in rural Clackamas County that was approved for building 60 2-story metal buildings which are being leased out. Complaints have driven Clackamas County Commissioners to implement ZD0271 ordinance which now allows only 1 OLCC recreational marijuana license or 1 OHA medical marijuana license per tract of land.



10770 SE 362nd, Boring, Oregon

In closing, Oregon Congressmen Earl Blumenauer and State Senator Ron Wyden are claiming that Oregon is having this illegal cartel problem because marijuana isn't legalized federally. Makes me realize how uninformed they are in relation to the impacts that marijuana is having on law enforcement and our rural farming communities. The legalization of hemp federally and marijuana only at the State level has created an umbrella of cover for all illegal cartels and many of our violating state licensed growers. They are taking over our rural farm lands, using our resources illegally, to make billions by selling to the black-market both nationally and internationally. This means that their theory of federal legalization curing this problem is a very untruthful statement. There has always been a black-market that undercuts the regulated market, as it has done with cigarettes.

AS AN EXAMPLE

- On **June 7, 2021** Daniel James Martin (We CBD LLC) from North Carolina who purchased property in **Clackamas County, Oregon** (29880 SE Folsom Rd. Eagle Creek) to grow hemp, was served a Civil forfeiture lawsuit by the Acting US Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina for **548.22 lbs.** of what they called hemp, but the majority was marijuana.
- We CBD LLC Daniel Martin and passenger **Michael A. (Ashdon) Raquiza** had removed the seats from a small Gulfstream GV aircraft and loaded it with **58 military-style duffle bags and 35 black trash bags full of both marijuana and hemp** and were attempting to illegally smuggle marijuana and hemp out of the United States and sought to fly it from Oregon to Charlotte then internationally to Switzerland. Through a tip from a Medford law enforcement official, they were met at the North Carolina airport by US Customs and Border law enforcement. The invoice which was found inside the plane, for the recipient in Switzerland (Lion Corners Switzerland GmbH-Wholesaler) was \$800,000 for assorted hemp flowers at the rate of \$5000 and quantity of 1, 600. This total did not include the shipping costs of \$80,000. [Business Registry Business Name Search \(state.or.us\)](#)



Details of this court document which is still in process is at the below link:

https://hempindustrydaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/merged_49592_-1-1623184730.pdf

- In 2007, New York State and New York City lost more than \$850 million in cigarette tax revenue due to the black-market.
- [Big tobacco's New York black market – Center for Public Integrity](#)
- [New Analysis Shows New York City Losing Up to \\$150 Million a Year from Internet Cigarette Websites | NY State Senate \(nysenate.gov\)](#)

We are way beyond wishing that law enforcement can control this. There are 1000's of international cartels that are setting up throughout Oregon. Law enforcement from the Siskiyou-mountain community on the California and Oregon border estimate that there are around 7000 illegal known grows.

THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN CREATED BY:

- The federal government not enforcing federal drug laws
- Thinking that you can regulate marijuana
- The State of Oregon has not made it a high priority to enforce
- State agencies who are tasked with enforcement, lack sufficient staff to enforce regulations
- Many who do not live in rural Oregon are unaware of the serious impacts
- Many local jurisdictions who follow state laws for recreational and medical marijuana provide little if any marijuana land use regulations through time, place, and manner offered through HB3400
- Local jurisdictions do not have sufficient code and law enforcement funding, therefore they are not making it a high priority

Oregon ranks second worst in the nation for addiction and has fallen to last place among states for access to treatment, according to the latest federal data. As long as there is a leaky faucet, there is going to be a flood of opportunity for the illegal market both cartel-driven and violating licensed market-driven to sell on the black-market. Licensed marijuana growers in California admit that 90% of their product goes to the black-market. Treatment specialists are going to have to think bigger, boarder, and better by understanding that all the prevention in the world isn't going to work unless we can help law enforcement stop the leaky faucet.

[Oregon is No. 2 in nation for addiction, last on access to treatment – Medford News, Weather, Sports, Breaking News | Mail Tribune](#)

Here is one idea:



Double dealing: Legal, illicit blur in California pot market

“It’s not too hard” to operate outside the tracking system’s guardrails, the grower said. Plants can vary widely in what each one produces, allowing for wiggle room in what gets reported, while there is little in the way of on-site inspections to verify record-keeping. The system is so loose, some legal farms move as much as **90%** of their product into the illicit market, the grower add

<https://www.adn.com/nation-world/2022/01/16/in-california-pot-market-a-hazy-line-between-legal-and-not/>

Oregon is in trouble and it is going to require a high priority multi-strategic approach that includes the commitment of all State and Federal departments, local jurisdictions, land use planning departments, code enforcement, law enforcement, prevention and treatment specialists and citizens working together to beat this back!

90% of Oregon is rural and citizens are horrified about what they see happening. We should all inspire ourselves to:

- **Take back Oregon by playing an active role helping educate your neighbors**
- **Be a big Voice about these concerns**
- **Get out of the Box and think Broader in helping to inform, engage, and empower local citizens**
- **Advocate for health and public safety**
- **Advocate that local-jurisdictions if opted in implement Time, Place, Manner regulations for marijuana production, processing, wholesaling and retailing holding the licensed businesses accountable**
- **Demand the State of Oregon make this issue top priority**
- **Inform your legislators and ask them to make this a high priority**

Let’s do everything we can to help keep these violating criminals from degrading our public safety, quality of life, and property values. I think that the cartels and licensed violators have under estimated Oregon’s rural communities! The rural West wasn’t won through complacency and we applaud local law enforcement and legislators who have been proactively sounding the horn that there is a problem in Oregon.

End

Shirley Morgan lives in Oregon and has a BA in Human Communications from Marylhurst University in West Linn (1999), Oregon; MA in Whole System Design/Organizational System Renewal from Antioch University in Seattle (2003), Washington; MS in Community and Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University-Manchester, New Hampshire (2008); Associates of Church Leadership-Portland Bible College, Oregon (2015)