



Policy to support the Sensible B.C. Campaign to Decriminalize Cannabis Possession in B.C.

Date of adoption: October 3, 2013

Date of expiration: October 3, 2015

Preamble:

Whereas, Sensible BC is a group which is working to decriminalize the simple possession of cannabis in British Columbia through the Sensible Policing Act.

Whereas, Police in BC are under the authority of the Police Act, an act of the BC Legislature. The Sensible Policing Act would amend the Police Act, instructing police not to spend any time, money or resources on cases of simple possession of cannabis by adults. This would apply to all RCMP and municipal police in BC. This simple change, called the Sensible Policing Act, would effectively decriminalize the possession of cannabis in BC, while leaving the rest of the laws in place.

Whereas, Decriminalizing the simple possession of cannabis in this manner will save taxpayers money, help unclog our justice system and stop young people from having their lives ruined over a joint. This is the first step towards a more sensible cannabis policy.

Cost savings: BC is spending more and more every year to charge people for simple possession of cannabis. The number of possession charges laid in BC more than doubled between 2005 and 2010. In this time of fiscal uncertainty, we should be spending taxpayer dollars more carefully.

Public safety: Arresting and charging people for simple possession of cannabis wastes police resources, which could be better spent dealing with real crime. Let's ensure police are empowered to direct their time and resources dealing with serious criminals, and not bothering about someone peacefully smoking a joint.

Public opinion: The latest polls show that the vast majority of British Columbians agree with Sensible BC that possession of cannabis should not lead to a criminal record, and that over two-thirds support marijuana being legally taxed and regulated. These views are consistent in all regions of the province and among voters for all parties.

Whereas, The Sensible Policing Act has two main parts

PART ONE - Decriminalize marijuana possession

The first part of the Sensible Policing Act is an amendment to the BC Police Act, which redirects all police in the province from using any police resources, including member time, on investigations, searches, seizures, citations, arrests or detentions related solely to simple possession of cannabis.

This section applies to all police in the province, essentially decriminalizing the simple possession of cannabis in BC. It doesn't impact on any of the laws around trafficking, possession for the purposes of trafficking, or cultivation.



To deal with minors, the Sensible Policing Act also adds cannabis to the section of the BC Liquor Control Act which covers minors in possession of alcohol. This will enable a police officer to confiscate cannabis from a minor, in exactly the same manner and with the same penalties as for alcohol.

PART TWO - Work Towards legal Regulation

The second part of the Sensible Policing Act formally calls upon the federal government to repeal cannabis prohibition by removing cannabis from the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, or to give British Columbia a "Section 56" exemption, so that our province can start legally taxing and regulating cannabis, using lessons learned from alcohol and tobacco.

This section also mandates the provincial government to Launch a public commission, which will hold hearings to study and recommend the specific rules needed for the province to implement a legally regulated cannabis system once the federal government allows it.

Resolution:

Be It Resolved That the KSA support the decriminalization the possession of cannabis in British Columbia.

Be It Further Resolved That the KSA support The Sensible Policing Act, which would amend the Police Act, outlined by the Sensible B.C. referendum Campaign.