

# Is the grass greener?

*By Kenny Digby*



Digby

Toward the end of your ballot on November 3, there will be two “medical” marijuana initiatives – Initiative Measure No. 65 and Alternative Measure No. 65A. Please vote NO on both.

Our hearts go out to parents who love and care for a child with chronic seizures. Our hearts go out to families with a terminally ill loved one with cancer and the pain it brings, but we do not believe “medical” marijuana is the answer.

Our Christian Action Commission members did their homework and talked with medical doctors and law enforcement personnel. On December 11, 2018, the commissioners voted unanimously to oppose legalizing “medical” marijuana in Mississippi. We Christians are to have a spirit-controlled, mind-controlled body.

Whoever wrote Initiative 65 must have been using “medical” marijuana. The policies and procedures in I-65 would be a four lane trip to more abuse and misuse, not less. I-65 would be a train wreck for our society.

Any time you change the state Constitution, it is a very serious matter. Sanctioning the use of marijuana in our Constitution in such a reckless way is problematic. A bad piece of legislation can be changed in the next session of the Mississippi Legislature. A mistake in the Constitution can

take decades to change, or longer.

If “medical” marijuana is really a medicine, why not follow set protocols for approval that are already in place? Why not use prescriptions and pharmacies for distribution? I’m not trying to take a pot shot (pardon the pun) at “medical” marijuana, but there will be pot shops everywhere, just as there are lottery tickets everywhere. One can, with easily obtained paperwork, go to a joint and get your joints (again, pardon the pun) – up 10 per day for a month plus refills.

Zoning for these pot shops and joint joints will be a huge issue. Basically, cities and counties will have little if any control. How would you like a driver under the influence of marijuana coming through your neighborhood? Hide the children.

I-65 has hardly any accountability or oversight written into the details. You’re talking about the fox guarding the hen house. You can only expect what you can inspect.

Often, promoters of a bad idea use increased revenue as a rationale for overlooking problems. They argue the tax revenues can build roads and bridges or improve education, or – by all means – add to the state’s rainy day fund. With “medical” marijuana, there will be no tax revenues for these needed projects. Any fees paid are sown back into the marijuana system. How dumb do they think we are?

“Regulation” is a favorite word for the drug and liquor crowd. If opioids could not be regulated under a genuine medical system, how can anyone regulate marijuana with the loosey goosey system in I-65?

Secondary smoke is a huge problem with tobacco. Many innocent folks have died of lung cancer. What about secondary smoke from marijuana? I guess social distancing will solve this problem.

Secondary use by others (relatives, friends) was a huge part

of the opioid epidemic. Oh, I'm sure none of the 300 joints in the initial dose of "medical" marijuana would ever – no, never – get smoked by a teenager or child in the household. We know the patient who has smoked a joint would never be careless with the other 299 joints. I-65 could have provided a combination lock for everyone's medicine cabinet, but then they wouldn't be able to remember the combination or where the medicine cabinet was.

Any marijuana is mind altering. Judgment is impaired. Safety on the highways, in the workplace, and during recreational activities will be an issue. I was a widower for seven years because of a driver under the influence.

Smoking marijuana destroys brain cells and decreases cognitive ability. Most of us can use all the gray matter we have. Addiction is a big problem. Even good, valid medicine can be addicting. Some argue marijuana is not physically addicting. If I think I'm hungry, I'm hungry. If someone thinks they are addicted, they have a terrible problem. Many testify that marijuana was their gateway drug to other drug abuse. "Medical" use does not prevent addiction or the need for a more intense high.

Money is the driving force in many arenas. Some will get rich from the industry of "medical" marijuana. Greed is a huge factor for many promoting I-65.

For all the above reasons and for the greater good, please vote NO on both "medical" marijuana initiatives on November 3. This grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. "Medical" marijuana is a smoke screen – don't be fooled.

*Digby is executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He may be contacted at [kdigby@christianaction.com](mailto:kdigby@christianaction.com).*