

ARLINGTON COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION
Legislative Committee
Resolution on Marijuana
December 6, 2016

Whereas the medical benefits of cannabis, commonly known as marijuana, are well established, to treat such maladies as cancer, Alzheimer's, seizures and diabetes (1);

Whereas the US Government has even recognized the medical value of cannabis to fight cancer through the Department of Health's National Cancer Institute (2);

Whereas 29 states and the District of Columbia (DC) have adopted "medical marijuana" and/or recreational usage programs without any major catastrophe or public health epidemic (3);

Whereas 86% of Virginians support a medical marijuana program (4);

Whereas objectively more addictive, socially damaging drugs like alcohol and tobacco are legal for adults to use (5,6,7);

Whereas current law mandates the suspension of a driver's license for the simple possession of marijuana for six months;

Whereas Virginia prohibits all forms of usage or possession of this medicine, even when prescribed for medicinal purposes (8);

Whereas the Virginia General Assembly has already passed laws that recognize the potential medical use of cannabis, but without a legal, fully-functioning path to acquire the medicine (9);

Therefore, be it resolved that the Arlington County Civic Federation urges the General Assembly consider updating the laws related to marijuana to:

- Immediately remove criminal penalties for the possession and use of cannabis (or "marijuana" as it is commonly known) so that it is treated like a parking ticket;
- Eliminate penalties related to driver's license suspension for marijuana possession; and
- Compare the existing medical marijuana programs in 29 states & DC for "best practices" in setting up a system in Virginia that gives patients the option to access cannabis to treat the many conditions for which it has been shown to provide therapeutic benefit.

1. National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. Accessed 12/20/15. "[Recent Research on Medical Marijuana.](#)"

2. National Cancer Institute. "[Cannabis and Cannabinoids \(PDQ\)-Patient Version.](#)"

3. National Cancer Institute. [“Questions and Answers about Cannabis.”](#)
4. Quinnipiac University. Quinnipiac University Poll. 4/4/15. [“With Big Age, Party Gaps, Iowa Voters Split On Marijuana, Quinnipiac University Swing State Poll Finds; Colorado, Virginia Voters Back Recreational Pot”](#)
5. Scientific Reports. 1/30/15. [“Comparative risk assessment of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other illicit drugs using the margin of exposure approach.”](#)
6. IFLscience.com. Accessed 9/20/16. [“New Study Finds Marijuana Safer Than Alcohol or Tobacco.”](#)
7. Washington Post. 2/23/15. [“Marijuana may be even safer than previously thought, researchers say.”](#) Discusses the results of the study mentioned in (5) to a non-scientific audience.
8. NORML.org. Accessed 9/20/16. [“Virginia Laws & Penalties.”](#)
9. Americans for Safe Access. 2/17/16 [“Virginia Senate Passes Medical Marijuana Program Improvement Bill](#)