I. Intro:
People have tried to convince the country’s leaders to legalize and tax the drug but to no avail. But why criminalize it when it causes fewer deaths and sickness than alcohol and tobacco. Marijuana can also be taxed and the revenue from the tax could help our economy. There is also the matter of the medical benefits of marijuana to those with illnesses that limit range of motion or induce nausea and pain.

II. Alcohol and tobacco are much more addictive and harmful than marijuana, but they are legally available

A. "We hypothesized that there would be a positive association between marijuana use and lung cancer, and that the association would be more positive with heavier use," he said. "What we found instead was no association at all, and even a suggestion of some protective effect. While no association between marijuana smoking and cancer was found, the study findings, presented at the American Thoracic Society International Conference, did find a 20-fold increase in lung cancer among people who smoked two or more packs of cigarettes a day" (Kaufman).

B. “Now the institute of medicine says that theory is misleading in the sense that marijuana use typically precedes rather than follows initiation of other illicit drug use, it is indeed a gateway drug. But because underage smoking and alcohol use typically precede marijuana use, marijuana is not the most common, and is rarely the first, gateway to drug use. There is no conclusive evidence that the drug effects of marijuana are linked to the subsequent abuse of other illicit drugs" (Koch).

C. “Tobacco kills 400,000, alcohol kills 100,000, all legal drugs kill 20,000, all illegal drugs kill 15,000, caffeine kills 2,000, aspirin kills 500, marijuana kills 0” (“Legalization Of Marijuana”).
III. Studies say marijuana also known as cannabis is an effective, safe and inexpensive alternative for treating nausea caused by AIDS medications, cancer treatments, unrelenting pain, muscle spasms, glaucoma, epilepsy, anorexia, asthma, insomnia, depression and many other disorders.

A. “Marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man. By any measure of rational analysis, marijuana can be safely used within a supervised routine of medical care. The administrative law judge recommends that the Administrator of the DEA conclude that the marijuana plant considered as a whole has currently been accepted for medical use in treatment in the United States, that there is no lack of accepted safety for use of it under medical supervision and that it may lawfully be transferred from a Schedule I to a Schedule II” (Koch).

B. "(A) The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse. (B) The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States. (C) There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision" (Koch).

IV. Now since every state has a budget problem we need some new solutions. An idea that hasn’t been utilized is to legalize and tax marijuana.

A. “The end to marijuana prohibition would merely require the rescheduling of marijuana from a Schedule I to a non-scheduled drug, similar to alcohol, nicotine, caffeine or ibuprofen. Once the federal government had decriminalized marijuana, all states would have the option of legalizing it. States could either be smoky or clear, similar to wet and dry locales after Prohibition ended in the 1930s” (Brown).

B. “Conservatively estimated, 20 percent of the government’s war on drugs expenditures goes toward marijuana. Assuming that Washington state spends one-fiftieth of the states' combined expenditure, this means we spend somewhere around $300 million to fight marijuana” (Brown).

C. “If we substitute a tax on marijuana cigarettes equal to the difference between the local production cost and the street price people currently pay--that is, transfer the revenue from the current producers and marketers (many of whom work with organized crime) to the government, leaving all other marketing and transportation issues aside we would have revenue of 7 dollars per unit. If you could collect on every cigarette and ignore the transportation, marketing, and advertising costs, this comes to over 2 billion on sales and substantially more from an export tax and you forego the costs of enforcement and deploy your policing assets elsewhere”(Moffatt).
V. Conclusion:
So to close we can now see that although many people have come to the false conclusion that marijuana is a harmful and dangerous drug that it is in fact not as bad as we have come to believe. In fact it is less harmful to the body than tobacco and alcohol prove to be. We can even use this “dangerous drug” to help people who suffer from insomnia, depression and even the miserable side effects of chemotherapy. If we do legalize this drug the government could tax it and the income of the individuals selling it to help make a dent in our countries struggling financial system.
Works Cited


