

The letter to ARDP reads:

Dear Mr. Leibsohn and Ms. Polk:

It has been brought to our attention that your committee has produced and aired television ads that convey inaccurate and misleading statements about Colorado's experience with regulating and taxing marijuana for adult use.

Specifically, your ad titled "Empty Promises" features a former Colorado local school official saying, "We were promised millions of new revenues for our schools, but they were empty words." It also features a Colorado school principal saying, "Politicians spent more money on regulation and bureaucracy than in the classroom." Similarly, in your ad titled "Mistake," former Denver mayor Wellington Webb says, "We were promised new money for education. Instead, that money is going to regulation and the pot industry."

The proponents of the initiative you are opposing and members of the Arizona media have raised questions about the validity of these claims. We have also heard from Colorado residents who read or saw stories about these ads in our local media outlets and were confused by the claims that they make.

As members of the Colorado Legislature who played intimate roles in the budgeting and appropriation of marijuana tax revenues, we feel it is our duty to set the record straight so that voters in both states have accurate information about this subject.

We can say with certainty that the claims about Colorado marijuana tax revenues featured in your committee's ads range from highly misleading to wholly inaccurate. As you can see in the attached issue brief provided by Colorado Legislative Council staff and fact sheet produced by the Colorado Department of Education:

- Of the approximately \$220.8 million in total marijuana tax revenue distributions made in FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17, more than \$138.3 million was distributed to the Colorado Department of Education to benefit Colorado schools. This far exceeds the amount that was distributed for the purposes of regulating marijuana, which included \$15.8 to the Department of Revenue, \$2.4 million to the Department of Agriculture, \$2.8 million to the Department of Law, and less than \$500,000 to the Governor's Office of Marijuana Coordination.

- Of those funds, \$114.9 million was distributed to the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) public school construction program. When Colorado voters adopted Amendment 64, they were promised a tax on wholesale marijuana transfers would raise \$40 million per year for the BEST program. That tax actually raised more than \$40 million in the last fiscal year, resulting in \$40 million for the BEST program in FY 2016-17, plus an additional \$5.7 million for Colorado's Public School Fund.

- In addition to the funds raised for the BEST program and the Public School Fund, more than \$5.5 million was used to increase the presence of health professionals in our schools, and more than \$4.3 million was used for health-related programs in schools. In addition, \$2.9 million was used for drop-out prevention programs, and \$2.9 million was used for school bullying prevention and education.

It is also worth noting that more than \$1.5 million in marijuana tax funds were distributed to the Department of Public Health and Environment to conduct the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, which is the most comprehensive survey of our state's middle and high school students. As you can see in the attached fact sheet from that department, the survey's findings contradict the claim that "marijuana use among our students soared," which is made in your ad titled "Empty Promises." Rates of teen use have actually remained relatively unchanged since 2009 and are in line with the national average. In fact, they were slightly lower last year than they were prior to legalization.

We respectfully request that you stop airing or otherwise publishing campaign ads that contradict these facts. We also trust they will be reflected in any of your future communications to Arizona voters regarding Colorado's experience with regulating and taxing marijuana for adult use.

Sincerely,

Rep. Jonathan Singer

Member, Colorado House Appropriations Committee

Rep. Millie Hamner

Chair, Colorado Joint Budget Committee

Vice Chair, Colorado House Appropriations Committee

Sen. Pat Steadman

Member, Colorado Joint Budget Committee

Member, Colorado Senate Appropriations Committee