

To Whom it may concern,

I have attempted for the last few weeks to upload my submission for the "Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria", however, every time I do so, it says there was an error in submitting it.

I had hoped this issue would be fixed closer to the closing date for applications, and indeed it says the website was updated yesterday, however after multiple attempts, I have still been unable to submit anything,

Therefore, I have decided it would probably be best to email it to you directly. I know it is just past the submission date, but I hope you can still accept my submission. Please find below my submission to the inquiry:

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Mr. Zackary Finn

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I honestly believe marijuana should be legalized for recreational purposes.

It's 2020, we know it's harmless compared to alcohol and tobacco, and we know it would create an economic boom, which we very much need right now in a post Covid19 economy. By creating a new agriculture industry for Australians to participate in, in addition to allowing them access to marijuana themselves, Australians' quality of life and financial future would greatly prosper.

I'm sure many others will make an argument for medicinal reasons and quality of life, so allow me to present the argument from another perspective:

Since legalizing recreational marijuana the US state of Colorado collected almost \$70 million in tax revenue within the first year, nearly double the \$42 million collected from alcohol taxes, a figure that rose to \$117 million within the first 18 months of legalization. Likewise, the state of Washington collected \$83 million within the first 12 months.

That money isn't just coming from Colorado residents either as tourism in the state has greatly increased. In 2014 the state recorded 71.3 million visitors that spent \$18.6 billion in Colorado, both record highs that coincided with the first year of marijuana legalization, and the total is likely higher as those figures don't account for retail sales of related products like pipes, or increased tourist spending in other aspects of the economy, such as hotels and restaurants.

Colorado now finds itself an economic anomaly in the global economic climate, with more money than it knows what to do with, even with a significant portion of that revenue already spent on funding public schools in the state, 23.9 million in 2014 alone.

Even more encouraging, crime is down in Denver and the surrounding area, road accidents declined as stoned drivers are considerably safer than drunk drivers, and all without any of the other dire consequences conservative opponents warn about.

According to poll data from a few years ago, 38 per cent of Australians believe that interest rates, unemployment, the cost of living, and the gap between rich and poor are more pressing issues than immigration, terrorism, environmental issues, and social problems.

Adding to the economic anxiety, economic experts claim that the Australian economy is facing an unprecedented future unlike anything seen in the past three decades in a post Covid19 world. And it's only going to get worse the experts say, with unemployment rates rising, the plummeting economy is reflected in the value of the Australian dollar against other global markets - currently at 74 US cents, but it fell closer to 60 US cents in April/May 2020, and is expected to remain at a depreciated value against all of Australia's major trading partners for the next few decades.

However it's not all doom and gloom on the horizon, there is an alternative to Australia's economic woes if we wish to capitalize on it.

So really, what are we waiting for already?

Signed,
Zackary J. Finn

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Thank you for taking the time to read my submission into this vitally important issue.

Warm Regards,

Zackary Finn