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**MEMORANDUM**

July 13, 2016

**TO:** Members of the Legalized Marijuana Cost-Benefit Analysis Interim Study Committee

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**SUBJECT:** Colorado Marijuana Research

**Summary**

This memorandum provides an overview of Colorado laws related to studying the impact of legalized marijuana.

Over the past three years, the Colorado legislature has passed several bills requiring state agencies to study the impact of legalized retail and medical marijuana.

**Department of Public Safety.** Senate Bill 13-283 required the Colorado Department of Public Safety (DPS) to conduct a study of law enforcement's activity and costs related to the implementation of legalized retail marijuana.<sup>1</sup> The study is to include information on a variety of topics, including marijuana-initiated contacts by law enforcement, marijuana arrest data, and traffic accidents related to being under the influence of marijuana. Senate Bill 16-191 extended the reporting requirement for DPS and requires the agency to publish studies every 2 years.

The first study was published in March 2016 and is available on the DPS website (<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dcj-ors/ors-reports>).

**Department of Public Health and Environment.** Senate Bill 14-155 created the Colorado Medical Marijuana Research Grant Program within the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).<sup>2</sup> The grant program is intended to fund research designed to determine the general medical efficacy and appropriate administration of marijuana and its

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<sup>1</sup>Section 24-33.5-516, C.R.S.

<sup>2</sup>Section 25-1.5-106.5, C.R.S.

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component parts as part of medical treatments. The bill required the establishment of a scientific advisory council, known as the Medical Marijuana Scientific Advisory Council, to provide a peer review process to evaluate research proposals for the grant program and provide recommendations to the State Board of Health regarding which grants to award. The grant program is required to provide an annual report to the State Board of Health detailing the progress of the funded studies.

A list of funded studies can be found on the CDPHE website (<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/medical-marijuana-scientific-advisory-council>).

Senate Bill 13-283 required CDPHE to monitor changes in drug use patterns and the emerging science and medical information relevant to the health effects associated with marijuana use.<sup>3</sup> The bill required CDPHE to appoint a panel of health care professionals with expertise in cannabinoid physiology to monitor the relevant information. This panel, known as the Retail Marijuana Public Health Advisory Committee, is required to provide a report every two years to the State Board of Health, the Department of Revenue, and the General Assembly.

An initial report was published in 2014 and is available on the CDPHE website (<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/retail-marijuana-public-health-advisory-committee>).

**Office of Marijuana Coordination.** Senate Bill 14-215 created the Governor's Office of Marijuana Coordination, which is responsible for coordinating the executive branch's response to the legalization of marijuana.<sup>4</sup> This includes aligning the regulations related to retail and medical marijuana across departments. The office is also responsible for identifying any gaps that exist in the data related to the impact of marijuana legalization on public health, safety, or economics across the state. Senate Bill 16-191 added a requirement that the office address these identified data gaps in consultation with the Joint Technology Committee.

**Colorado State University – Pueblo.** Senate Bill 16-191 allows the General Assembly to allocate revenues from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund, and appropriated \$900,000 for FY 2016-17, to Colorado State University (CSU) to be used for education and research programs at CSU-Pueblo, including the scientific and social science research of marijuana.

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<sup>3</sup>Section 25-1.5-110, C.R.S.

<sup>4</sup>Section 24-38.3-101, et seq., C.R.S.