

## Legalizing marijuana is sane, healthier alternative to drug war madness

by Allan Erickson

To the editor-

The column by Debra Saunders, The Drug War Body Count, (Mon, March 16, 2009) is a necessary read. The time has come to end this drug war madness. We now have cartels operating with impunity in every major city in the U.S.

When legalization is the subject it is not just the pot smokers. Three former Latin American presidents are not lightweight figures by any means. Even the Obama administration is now taking steps, making needle exchanges a priority shift over previous administrations punish-at-all-costs priorities.

Yet here in Oregon drug war madness still has a lot of momentum. Dan Harmon and his group Associated Oregon Industries are trying to eliminate the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program. Grants Pass Rep Ron Maurer wants to have the state grow cannabis, taking that right away from patients. In reality complete legalization will eliminate not just the hassle imposed on patients and citizen tokers but will drive the cartels from the pot industry in Oregon.

Legalization is the sane, healthier alternative to the societally crippling disease of drug war madness.

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