

Rep. Hanna seeks to deceive with ban on medical marijuana in workplace

by *Ralph Givens*

Dear Editor,

Rep. Hanna seeks to deceive when he lumps marijuana in with alcohol as a cause of workplace injuries. The fact is that 5-20% of on-the-job occupational injury involve alcohol without any other drug involved.

House Republican Leader Bruce Hanna is probably working for the drug testing industry since they are the only ones who gain from universal drug tests. Employers stand to lose a bundle if Hanna succeeds because according to the Le Moyne study, drug testing reduces a company's effectiveness. "We found that productivity was 16 percent lower in companies with pre-employment testing than those that didn't test, and it was 29 percent (lower) in companies with both pre-employment and random testing." (See references 1, 2, 3)

Drug testing to improve workplace safety is another fiction because the National Academy of Sciences found that illegal drug use causes few workplace accidents and that off-duty drug use has about the same small effect on worker accidents as off-duty drinking. The reason

drugs cause very little trouble in the workplace is simple. People use drugs away from work in ways that do not affect job safety or performance. (See reference: Drug Testing and Workplace Accidents Paul Rountree, M.D.)

In 2001, the American Civil Liberties Union issued a report based on studies by the National Science Foundation and the AMA showing that testing has been ineffective in reducing drug use and has no noticeable impact on reducing either absenteeism or improving productivity. The AMA found it costs a company \$77,000 to find one drug user by testing all employees.

There is no valid evidence whatsoever that drug testing benefits businesses or the public in any way. Lowering the efficiency of the work force 16-29% without any benefits is just plain stupid. Oregon employers who want laws regarding drug use are obviously not concerned about how profitable their businesses are.

Lowering productivity is not the only fraud involved in drug testing. More than 65 prescription and over the counter medications produce false positive results. If a person takes Advil, Nuprin, Motrin, Excedrin Ibuprofen, Aleve (Naproxen), has a Kidney infection, Diabetes or Liver Disease there can be a false positive for marijuana. Nyquil, Contact, Sudafed, Allerest, Tavist-D, Dimetapp, Phenegan-D, Robitussin Cold and Flu, Vicks Nyquil (Ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, propylephedrine, phenylephrine, or desoxyephedrine) create erroneous indications for amphetamines. Poppy Seed bagels, Tylenol with codeine, Cough suppressants with Dextromethorphan (DXM), and most prescription pain medications produce a false positive for Heroin use.

Drug testing was created by drug war profiteers like Robert L Dupont (former drug czar), Carlton Turner (former drug czar) and Peter Bensinger (former head of NIDA) for their own profit. After persuading

Congress and the public that drug tests were the solution to our drug problems these greedy poltroons joined together in forming Bensinger, Dupont & Associates (the world's largest drug testing company) to cash in the drug testing policy they established. Bensinger, Dupont & Associates contracted as advisors to 250 of the nation's largest corporations to corner the drug testing market and reap a fortune for these promoters of universal drug testing.

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