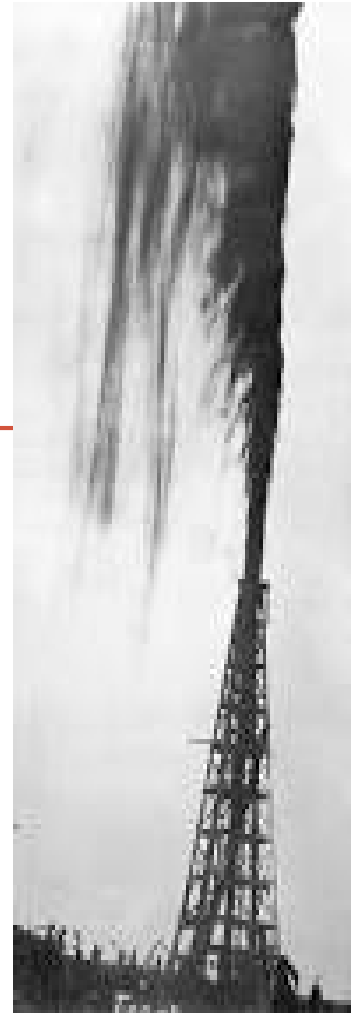


THE NEW BOOM

Equity Perspectives on
Marijuana Policy and the Industry



- In what ways will the legalization of marijuana and the development of a legal industry contribute to a more equitable society?
- In what ways might these changes exacerbate inequity?

Marijuana and Mass Incarceration

Over many decades, the criminalization of marijuana has taken a devastating toll, particularly on African American and Latino families.

Marijuana arrests have sent thousands of men and women to prison, separated families and dramatically increased poverty.



The Legacy of the War on Drugs

- Reduced access to affordable housing,
- Vacant and blighted properties
- Struggling entrepreneurs of color
- Lifelong joblessness for people with felony convictions.



Racial bias in marijuana arrests

- According to the ACLU, African Americans have been arrested at rates 3.7 times greater than Whites for marijuana-related crimes.
- At the national level, of the 8.2 million marijuana arrests between 2001 and 2010, 88% were for simply having marijuana.

Examples of local arrest data

Oakland

- In 2015, African Americans accounted for 77% of marijuana arrests while making up 30% of the population.

Sacramento

- From 2012-2016, African Americans consisted of 43% of marijuana arrests while making up 15% of the population.

A Reparations Approach

How do we repair some of the harm to Black and Latino communities generated by the War on Drugs?

How do we insure that marijuana policy going forward doesn't create further harm and inequity?

Marijuana Legalization

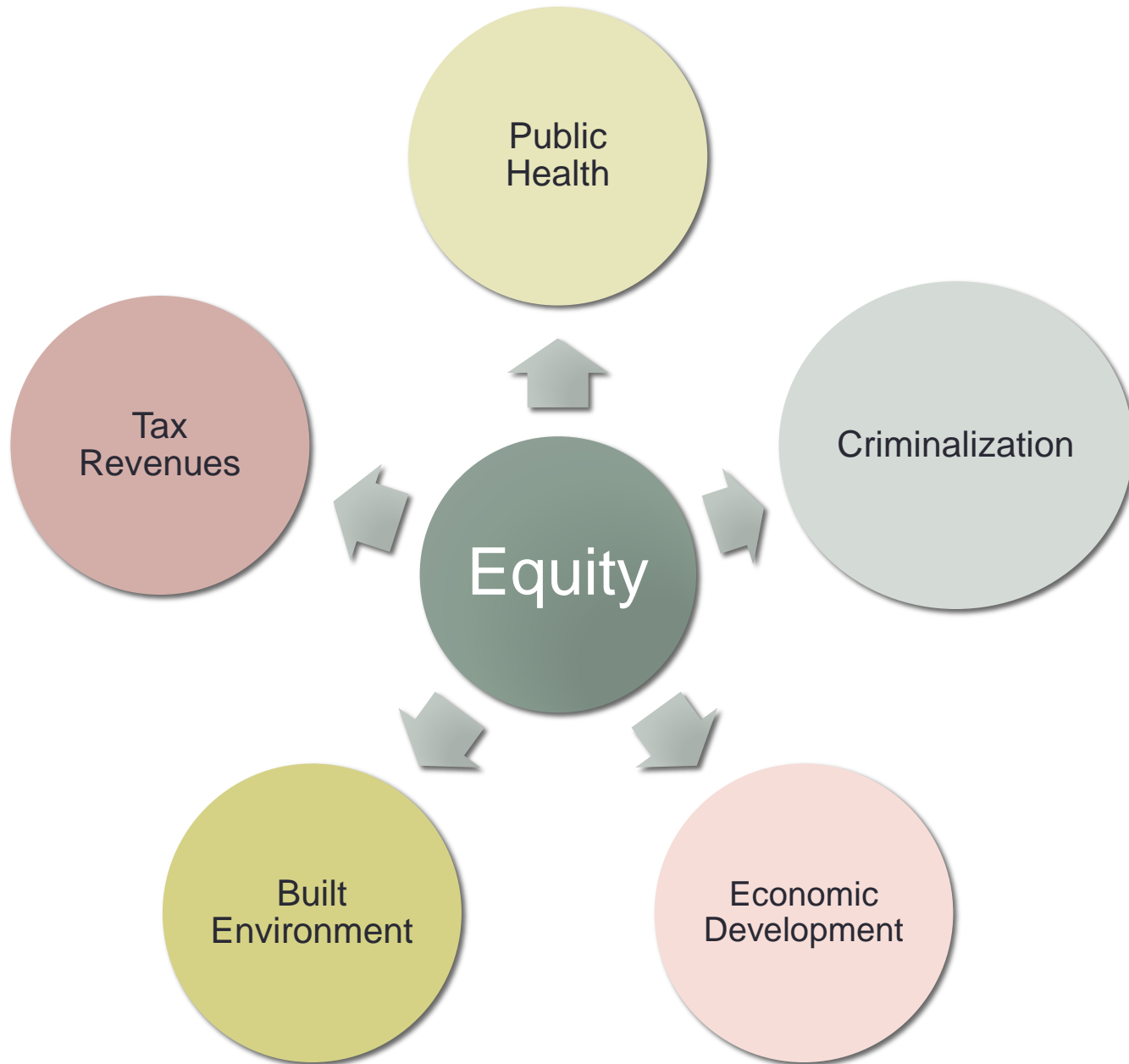
A Transfer of Wealth

Underground
Economy



Legal
Economy

benefitting primarily
white entrepreneurs and
investors



Decriminalization under Prop 64

Prop 64 reduced or eliminated penalties for most marijuana offenses.

- Adults can petition for resentencing or for reclassification for certain offenses.
- Youth under age 18 may only be charged with infractions.

Criminalization Going Forward

- Non-citizen immigrants risk deportation
- Marijuana industry and law enforcement push for crackdown on the underground economy
- Increases in law enforcement budgets
- Racial profiling for driving while under the influence.

Built Environment

- Concentration of marijuana businesses in low-income areas and communities of color that abut industrial/warehouse areas.
- Concentration of marijuana advertising.
- Marijuana businesses drive up property values and contribute to displacement of residents and existing businesses.

Built Environment

- Illegal growing on tribal lands and rural areas.
 - Example- Hmong immigrant growers face crackdown, not able to transition to legal status
 - Contamination of streams and soil
- Conflicts between existing tobacco policy and marijuana laws.
 - Smoking in public housing
- Pesticides and worker's rights

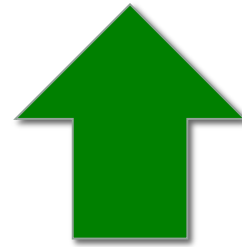
Local Tax Revenues

- City and county marijuana tax revenues flow to the general fund.
- The biggest recipients of general fund dollars are law enforcement agencies.
- In the absence of organizing, law enforcement budgets will increase, thus continuing the pattern of marijuana policy driving criminalization.

When cities raise revenues from marijuana...



City
Revenues



Law
Enforcement

State Tax Revenues

- According to the LAO, the State will collect about \$1 billion in new revenues by 2020.
- 60% of revenues in the Tax Fund go to support youth education, prevention, early intervention and treatment (about \$500 million annually in a few years).
- Prop 64 did not include any equity language in how Youth Funds are to be distributed.
- The only funding stream with an equity focus is the smaller Community Reinvestment grants program.

Public Health

- The marijuana industry relies heavily on the frequent user for its profitability. A third of users consume two-thirds.
- The earlier someone starts using marijuana, the greater the chance of problem use and addiction.
- Marijuana use is concentrated in lower income communities.

Thus

We may see the industry take a predatory approach to low income neighborhoods and communities of color, similar to that of tobacco and alcohol.

Economic Development Advocacy

To support the participation of people of color and those directly affected by marijuana arrests, local and state government can:

- Set aside a percentage of permits/licenses
- Create a business incubator program
- Establish a loan fund
- Set hiring goals
- Support contracts and new businesses in ancillary industries (construction, security, hiring etc..)
- Remove employment and ownership barriers (fees, criminal records...)

Tax Policy Advocacy

Rather than invest marijuana revenues in law enforcement and general public services, local and state government can:

- Fund reentry programs including job placement and mental health supports
- Support children's services and youth development in neighborhoods most impacted by criminalization
- Use revenues to support economic development
- Support prevention and substance abuse services

Public Health Advocacy

Local communities can advocate for:

- A fair distribution of marijuana businesses
- Restrictions on marijuana advertising
- Stronger health protections, such as a clearer warning label
- Signage inside stores regarding adverse health impacts and threat to non-citizen immigrants
- Community-based prevention efforts to denormalize marijuana use, particularly among young people and pregnant women

Contact info:

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Racial Justice, Public Health and Marijuana Policy
Convening, January 23rd, 10 am to 3 pm, The California
Endowment Conference Center, Los Angeles

http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/51417/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=10385