

University of Iowa News Release

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### **Majority of Iowans Favor Legalizing Medical Marijuana**

With medical marijuana recently adopted in Illinois and likely to be on the agenda again in Iowa during the 2014 legislative session, a majority of Iowans support such a reform. Still, Iowans remain strongly opposed to following Colorado and Washington's lead by legalizing marijuana for recreational use.

A University of Iowa Hawkeye Poll conducted 11/10/13-11/17/13 of about 1,000 Iowans found 59.3 percent of respondents support legalizing marijuana for medicinal purposes while only 31.6 percent support legalizing marijuana for recreational purposes.

Support varied by age group, with over two of every three respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 favoring legalization of medical marijuana (67.6 percent) and almost three in five respondents between 35 to 54 and 55 to 69 percent favoring (57.5 and 59.6, respectively). Support drops to 45.3 percent among respondents aged 70 and over. Support for legalization of recreational marijuana follows a similar pattern, with 43.9 percent of younger respondents favoring reform, just under three in ten between 35 to 54 (29.5 percent) and 55 to 69 (28.3 percent), and only 15.7 percent of respondents over 70 supporting legalization for recreational use.

"Opinion in Iowa seem to be following the national trend of increased acceptance of the medicinal use of marijuana," commented Fred Boehmke, Professor of Political Science at the University of Iowa. "As more states adopt medical marijuana policies, citizens seem to be more accepting of it. It will be interesting to see whether opinion on legalization for recreational use ends up following the same pattern over the next decade or so given the recent changes in Colorado and Washington."

[Topline results and other releases available at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/polisci/research/hawkeye-poll>.]

If Iowa were to permit marijuana for medical or recreational purposes, about five in six respondents (84.2 percent) agree that it should be taxed and regulated, with little variation across age groups. Respondents split over whether marijuana use was harmful, with 58.5 percent of all respondents agreeing with this statement. Strong age differences emerged, though, with 45.2 percent of those under 35 stating it is harmful compared to 14.4 percent of those aged 70 and over.

Over two in four Iowans indicated that they had ever tried marijuana (41.3 percent), again with strong differences by age. Nearly half of respondents in the 18 and 34 and 35 to 54 age groups report trying marijuana (49.7 and 47.7 percent, respectively). Reported use drops to 39.5 percent among those age 55 to 69 and to 11.5 percent among those over 70.

*Background:* The Hawkeye Poll was conducted Nov. 10-17, 2013 by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of UI faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students in political science, with the cooperation and facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center, directed by UI Sociology Professor Kevin Leicht. The faculty adviser for the poll is UI Professor of Political Science Frederick J. Boehmke. The poll is a teaching, research and service project of the UI Department of Political Science. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Provost fund the poll.

*Respondent identification:* A random sample was acquired with 70 percent household landline numbers and 30 percent mobile phone numbers. For households, an initial attempt was made on answering the phone to reach the "youngest male who is 18 years or older." All who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included.

*Sample:* 1038 participants, margin of error for full sample is +/- 3 percent. Among these respondents, 32.55 percent were Democrat, 26.72 percent Republican and 34.55 percent Independent. 46.49 percent considered themselves moderate, while 20.92 percent self-identified as liberal and 30.9 percent as conservative.

*Weighting:* Reported results are weighted by sex and age.

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