



Alaska State Legislature

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House Bill 296

“An Act creating the Alaska marijuana use prevention youth services grant program; creating the Alaska marijuana use prevention, education, and treatment fund; relating to the duties of the Alaska Children’s Trust Board; creating the marijuana use education and treatment program; and relating to the duties of the Department of Health and Social Services.”

Sponsor Statement:

In 2014, Alaskans legalized the use and possession of marijuana in the state. Ballot measure 2 gave the state the ability to tax and regulate the production, sale, and use of marijuana. In 2015 the Alaska Legislature implemented a \$50/ounce tax on the sale or transfer of marijuana from a marijuana cultivation facility to a retail marijuana store or marijuana product manufacturing facility. Since the measure went into effect in early 2015 the state has collected more than \$6 million dollars in tax revenue.

HB 296 creates the *Alaska marijuana use prevention, education, and treatment fund*. Under current Alaska Statute 43.61.010 (b), 50% of the tax revenue generated from marijuana sales is designated to go to the recidivism reduction fund established within the general fund. The remaining fifty percent goes directly into the general fund. With HB 296, the remaining 50% would be allocated into the new fund.

Under HB 296, 50% of the new fund- 25% of the total marijuana tax revenue- may be allocated to the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) for a comprehensive marijuana use education and treatment program, and the remainder of the funds – the remaining 25% - will go to the newly established *Alaska marijuana use prevention youth services grant program* which is administered by the Alaska Children’s Trust Board.

The program implemented by DHSS will focus on statewide misuse prevention and education on the effects of marijuana and the Alaska marijuana laws. It also funds substance abuse screening and treatment as well as monitoring public perception. Separately, the Alaska Children’s Trust Board will administer the *Alaska marijuana use prevention youth services grant program*, giving grants to non-profit out-of-school programs that provide youth marijuana use prevention and reduction curriculums.

It is the intent that the Legislature treat marijuana much like alcohol and tobacco and invest in prevention, education, and treatment services in youths and adults to reduce long-term associated costs. House Bill 296 creates statewide programs as well as the funding structure to do so.