



# CANNABIS LEGALIZATION

The war on drugs has failed — and it has failed our communities. The enforcement of cannabis prohibition laws wastes taxpayer dollars, perpetuates racial disparities, ruins lives, and locks people up with minor convictions in overcrowded jails and prisons.

- 23 states have enacted sensible public policies by legalizing adult-use cannabis.<sup>1</sup>
- Criminalizing marijuana wastes millions of dollars in police, prosecutorial, judicial, and correctional resources. In Hawai'i, it costs taxpayers over \$90K per year to incarcerate one adult.<sup>2</sup>
- Legalization makes it possible to regulate cannabis use similar to alcohol and tobacco use.
- Regulating and taxing cannabis can raise millions of dollars for essential services like schools and proven community safety programs.
- Native Hawaiians do not use drugs at drastically different rates but are incarcerated for drug offenses more often than people of other races or ethnicities in Hawai'i.<sup>3</sup>
- Legalization must include social equity components: ensuring local ownership by impacted communities and expungement of prior cannabis convictions.<sup>4</sup>

To learn more, visit: [www.acluhi.org](http://www.acluhi.org)  
[action@acluhawaii.org](mailto:action@acluhawaii.org)

## 9/10

adults in the U.S. believe people who possess or use small amounts of marijuana should not face any jail time.<sup>5</sup>

## 86%

of adult Hawai'i residents favor legalizing recreational marijuana.<sup>6</sup>

## 1/3

of the people admitted to prison for drug offenses are Native Hawaiian.<sup>7</sup>

Black people are

## 2-4x

more likely to be arrested for marijuana than white people in Hawai'i.<sup>8</sup>

(1) <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/where-is-marijuana-legal-a-guide-to-marijuana-legalization>, (2) <https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/PSD-ANNUAL-REPORT-2022compressed.pdf>, (3) [https://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ir\\_final\\_web\\_rev.pdf](https://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ir_final_web_rev.pdf), (4) <https://www.mpp.org/issues/legalization/social-equity-policies-in-adult-use-legalization-laws/>, (5) <https://www.aclu.org/issues/criminal-law-reform/drug-law-reform/marijuana-law-reform>, (6) [https://www.kitv.com/news/business/poll-86-of-adult-hawaii-residents-favor-legalizing-recreational-marijuana/article\\_e4ae2a70-a1c8-11ed-bf4c-fb0e58d3d885.html](https://www.kitv.com/news/business/poll-86-of-adult-hawaii-residents-favor-legalizing-recreational-marijuana/article_e4ae2a70-a1c8-11ed-bf4c-fb0e58d3d885.html) (7) See source 3. (8) <https://www.legalizehawaii.org/why-legalize-and-regulate/>