



Please Vote YES on HB 16-1214

Combating Illegal Marijuana Grow Operations

Sponsor: Rep. Conti

Counties across Colorado are seeing an increase in the number of illegal marijuana grow operations. These criminal operations are located in both rural and urban settings and local law enforcement is often hamstrung in its ability to properly investigate and shut down these criminal enterprises. In rural counties like Saguache County in the San Luis Valley, there are insufficient law enforcement resources to patrol and monitor the thousands of square miles of public land where these operations locate. Many of these operations are masquerading as medical marijuana caregivers, further clouding their legal status and making investigation and prosecution difficult. Moreover, the current penalties in statute are insufficient to dissuade criminals who stand to make hundreds of thousands of dollars from taking their illegally-grown marijuana across state lines for sale and distribution.

HB 1214 is an attempt to assist local law enforcement in battling the increasing number of illegal marijuana grow operations across our state. The bill provides protection against litigation for our local law enforcement agencies and beefs up the criminal penalties for conducting illegal marijuana grow operations. At the request of the state health department, the bill also moves up the implementation deadline for establishing plant caps on medical marijuana caregivers (initially enacted in last year's SB15-14).

For Amendment 64 to work properly, Colorado needs to push marijuana cultivation to the regulated and licensed market and prevent diversion and sale out of state. This bill is an important step in that process and will aid our local law enforcement agencies in protecting our communities and eliminating the scourge of illegal marijuana grow operations.

CCI asks for your YES vote on HB 16-1214

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