



Informational Packet

September 2006



Michigan NORML
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Michigan NORML Chapters

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Contact: [Rev. Steve Thompson](#)
Phone: (231)-882-9721

Berrien County NORML
Contact: [Don Barnes](#)
Phone: (269)-684-6437

Flint/Genesee County NORML
Contact: [Brian Morrissey](#)
Phone: (810)-238-9737

Hillsdale County NORML
Contact: [Trena Moss](#)
Phone: (517)-869-2694

Macomb County NORML
Contact: [Charles David Frakes](#)
Phone: (586)-873-5084
www.mcnorml.org

University of Michigan NORML
Contact: [Sam Maxbauer](#)
Phone: (734)-565-0817

Oakland County NORML
Contact: [Greg Piasecki](#)
Phone: (248)-391-4378
www.oaklandnorml.org

Southwest Michigan NORML
Contact: [Greg Francisco](#)
Phone: (269)-628-4340

Tuscola County NORML
Contact: [Bob Wood](#)
Phone: (989)-325-0674

Starting a Chapter

If there is not already a chapter in your area or at your school, we encourage you to start one. To do so, follow the three steps outlined below. If you have any questions or need any help along the way, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

1. Meet the requirements for becoming a NORML chapter

According to NORML's [requirements for forming a NORML chapter](#), all chapters must include at least five current NORML members and must agree to follow additional guidelines, including adopting a set of bylaws. Some flexibility on the five member rule is possible for student groups. For an example set of bylaws, see the [Macomb County NORML Bylaws](#) (in Microsoft Word format). See the above link to NORML's website for further details.

2. Register with your school or with the State of Michigan

If you are starting a college chapter, you will need to register as an official student group with your school. The process for doing so varies greatly by school; check with your student activities office for more information. Otherwise, you will need to register as a non-profit organization with the State of Michigan. We have put together an example [articles of incorporation](#) in editable PDF format which you will need to complete and mail to the address indicated on the form.

3. Send an application form to NORML

Finally, complete the NORML chapter [application form](#) and mail it to NORML's national office in Washington, D.C. When you're done, be sure to [contact us](#) so we can add your chapter to our website.



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How to Form a NORML Chapter

Download the **application form** in PDF format (requires the **Acrobat** plug-in).

Your state and local efforts are very important. We need to establish a network of citizen-advocates around the nation to advance the cause of ending marijuana prohibition and stopping the arrests of responsible smokers. Currently NORML has over 100 active chapters around the U.S.A. (and world) working hard in their communities to change these laws.

** Recently Certified Chapters!*

NORML of Tuscola County
Maui NORML
Aurora Borealis NORML

But we're going to need to get many more people involved to effect real change. Establishing a NORML chapter is, arguably, one of the most effective things you can do.

Your willingness to support NORML at the state and local level is greatly appreciated. Former House Speaker Tip O'Neil was famous for saying that "all politics are local." It's important that your NORML chapter concentrate locally and organize from the town/city level to the state level. Working together we'll end cannabis prohibition once and for all.



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Guidelines for Affiliation with NORML

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) is a non-profit corporation chartered in the District of Columbia and authorized by the IRS to operate as a 501(c)(4) public-interest lobby. NORML supports ending marijuana prohibition and opposes the practice of arresting otherwise law-abiding citizens who smoke marijuana. NORML's goals are more fully explained in the organization's basic brochure and on its web site (www.norml.org).

NORML wishes to affiliate and work cooperatively with local and statewide organizations that share our general goals. The following guidelines indicate the criteria which an organization must meet to qualify for affiliation with NORML, including the use of "NORML" in the affiliate's name.

1. The group applying for affiliation must include at least 5 current NORML members; however, NORML will accommodate campus chapters that do not currently meet this requirement by offering reduced-rate student memberships of \$15, or we will extend the deadline for a short period of time while the first 5 memberships are submitted to the national office.
 - 1a. Once an organization is officially recognized as a NORML affiliate:
 - I. Any individual who joins a state or local affiliate of NORML for \$10 or more will receive a free one year membership to national NORML
 - II. Any student who joins a campus chapter for \$5 or more will receive a free one year membership to national NORML.
2. Applicant group must either (1) be a non-profit corporation established and operating under the laws that govern non-profit organizations in your state, or must form a non-profit corporation, adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws, register with the secretary of state (or other appropriate state office), and follow all state laws and regulations governing the operation of not-profit corporations; or (2) in the case of a campus-based student chapter, must comply with all college or university requirements for campus organizations, and must seek official recognition from the college or university.
3. The group must agree to conduct organizational business in a manner prescribed by state law for non-profit organizations, including the holding of regular board meetings, the keeping of board meeting minutes, and the holding of regular elections as required in the bylaws. Affiliates will be required to send an end of the year report including all of the aforementioned materials.
4. The group must agree to pursue a program intended to educate the public; lobby local, state and federal officials; or otherwise build support for ending the criminal prohibition of marijuana and the arrest of marijuana smokers.
5. The group must agree to operate in a professional manner and to avoid activities that would bring disrepute or otherwise harm NORML and its reform efforts. This includes the sale of so-called drug paraphernalia, grow lights and seeds (other than sterile hemp seeds). Also, chapters should seriously consider seeking a local legal opinion regarding the sale of drug testing alternatives and flush remedies.
6. After a one year grace period, every state affiliate is required to host at least one fundraising event annually (i.e. concert, party, etc.) co-sponsored by national NORML, whereby the proceeds will be split among the two involved organizations. NORML will provide assistance by promoting the show through our e-mail and mailing lists. Campus chapters, while not required to comply with this rule, are stongly encouraged to do so.



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Chapter Revocation Procedure:

NORML reserves the right to revoke the affiliate status of any group or organization which fails to operate in accordance with these guidelines. In order for a chapter's affiliate status to be revoked, it must receive one formal warning, in writing, detailing which guidelines they fail to comply with and what can be done to remedy the situation. If two months after the warning has been issued the affiliate still is not in compliance, their status as an official NORML affiliate may be revoked by a vote of the NORML Board of Directors.

Questions regarding the affiliation process should be directed to Karen Malovrh, NORML Chapter and Outreach Coordinator, 1600 K ST., NW, SUITE 501, WASHINGTON, DC 20006. Telephone: (202) 483-5500. E-mail: chapters@norml.org

Those groups that wish to affiliate with NORML must complete the following **application** (requires the **Acrobat** plug-in) and submit to NORML for approval. No group or organization is authorized to act as an affiliate, or to publicly include "NORML" in their name, until the application has been approved by the Executive Director.

Retrieved from:

[How to Start a NORML Chapter](#)

updated: Jul 14, 2006



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Application for Affiliation with NORML

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NAME OF PROPOSED AFFILIATE:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE AND ZIP:

CONTACT PERSON:

TELEPHONE: _____

FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

NAMES OF FIVE (5) CURRENT NORML MEMBERS (Please type or print):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
- .

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BYLAWS AND ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION. (This is a requirement for affiliation. Campus-based groups may submit proof of compliance with all college or university requirements for official campus organizations.)

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SEND APPLICATION TO:

NORML
1600 K Street, NW
Suite 501
Washington, DC 20006-2832

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Organizing a Meeting

Running a Meeting

Meetings are the most basic tool your organization has. They are the central point from which to recruit members and plan activities. To be effective, meetings need to be organized and well run. Meetings need direction and interactivity to inspire students to activism. The purpose of this presentation is to provide key points to make your meeting effective.

Types of Meetings

- **Public Meetings**
 - Held to recruit and educate new members. They are your welcome mat. Having a facilitator(s) and an agenda for these meetings is especially important, because many of the people who show up will be unfamiliar with the cause. Taking care of detailed organizational concerns or contentious issues here is not always a good idea, because it can put off uninvolved attendees. Public meetings should be scheduled at a regular time and place convenient to your membership. They should provide an overview of current issues and chapter activities, and should be held to about an hour.
- **Organizational Meetings**
 - Held for specific purposes, such as taking care of official business, planning the details of an event, or charting a plan for the school year or beyond. These types of meetings are usually invitation-only, and include either the leaders of the group or members of a specific committee. They can be informal and held wherever is convenient (on campus, at a restaurant, coffee shop, or somebody's house). Just don't get too stoned that you are not productive.
- **Annual Meetings**
 - Should be held at least once a year. It is basically a public organizational meeting, the democratic event where members show up to decide the overall direction of your NORML chapter. Annual meetings should be announced at least two weeks in advance, and take place any time there is a change in the chapter's leadership.

What a Meeting Needs

- **Location**
 - Public meetings are usually best held on campus, or any place which is free and easily accessible to members of your group. Organizational meetings can be held in your regular spot, or at an alternate location such as a restaurant, café, bowling alley, or someone's house. Annual meetings, like public meetings should be held in a neutral, free place. Most of all, the location needs to be one which everybody is comfortable with and can easily get to.
- **Agenda**
 - Every meeting needs a focus and a timetable. It is the Facilitator's job to make sure that all relevant issues are placed on the agenda, and that they are dealt with in the amount of time allotted. The agenda should be prepared before the meeting, but should also maintain enough flexibility to accommodate issues brought by people who show up.



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- **Facilitator**
 - Every meeting needs a leader. The person should be active in the chapter, and come early with an agenda and meeting timetable. The Facilitator's job is to make sure the meeting is run fairly, and kept on schedule. This jobs usually falls to the activist who organized the meeting, such as the chapter president or committee chair.
- **Secretary (optional)**
 - The secretary's job is to report what happened at the last meeting, and record what happens at the current meeting, including the goals to be accomplished before the next meeting. Organizational and Annual meetings need a Secretary to keep official records of the meeting and any volunteers for any committees and subcommittees.

Meeting Structures

There are several ways that meetings can be structured. Public meetings are the most flexible, since Organizational and Annual meetings are by-and-large dictated by the business they are scheduled to be taken care of.

- **Open Discussion**
 - When there isn't much to talk about on the Agenda, meetings tend to revert to a general, open discussion about cannabis and/or NORML. The meeting's Facilitator should utilize these periods to gauge interests among the group for future meetings and activities.
- **Programmed Discussion**
 - This is where numerous issues are dealt with in a set amount of time. The discussion can be led entirely by the meeting Facilitator, or each issue can be led by different people familiar with the issue(s).
- **Working Groups**
 - Splitting large meetings into working groups is an effective way of accomplishing multiple goals, and providing a diverse range of activist opportunities for attendees. Each group should have a leader who is familiar with the project, and who knows what needs to get done. Meetings are often split into groups after a programmed discussion that gives an overview of issues to the entire group.

Meeting Ideas

Annual meetings specifically take care of the business of the chapter's leadership and direction, while organizational meetings are usually proactive affairs to implement ideas agreed upon at recent public meetings. Again, public meetings are the most flexible. Here is a list of sample ideas you can use for your future agendas:

- **Chapter Events**
 - Making/marketing buttons, t-shirts, etc.
 - Organizing information tables (student union, in dorms)
 - Planning a fundraiser (benefit show, car wash, private party)
 - Getting involved with campus or community events (music festivals, homecoming)
 - Organizing a protest or teach-in (Valentines' Day Vigil, HEA National Day of Action, Million Marijuana March)



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- **Local Action**
 - Lobbying for state or local legislation
 - Writing letters to elected officials
 - Writing letters to newspapers/letters to the editor
 - Networking with other student or community group
- **Educational Sessions**
 - Read and discuss current events (NORML News of the Week, local or national news clippings, High Times Magazine)
 - Watch videos (GRASS, Emperor of Hemp, conference videos, news broadcasts, www.pot-tv.net)
 - Discuss important books and articles (Jack Herer's *"The Emperor Wears No Clothes"*, anything by Ed Rosenthal (*"Big Book of Buds"*, *"Closet Cultivator"*, *"Marijuana—The Law and You"*), Lester Grinspoon's *"Marihuana Reconsidered"*, David Courtright's *"Forces of Habit — Drugs and the Making of the Modern World"*, Bonnie and Whitebread's *"The Forbidden Fruit and the Tree of Knowledge"*, the *"1972 Schaffer Commission Report"*, the *"1944(?) LaGuardia Report"*, Judge Francis Young's 1988 ruling in the case of *"NORML vs. DEA"*, www.druglibrary.org).
- **Activity Sessions**
 - Designing flyers, buttons, t-shirts, banners, etc.
 - Letter writing (usually more effective if someone brings a sample letter, envelopes, and postage)
 - Sorting through and organizing the chapter's materials
 - Brainstorming other event and activity plans



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NORML'S STATEMENT ON THE DECRIMINALIZATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF MARIJUANA

NORML supports the removal of all penalties for the private possession and responsible use of marijuana by adults, including cultivation for personal use, and casual nonprofit transfers of small amounts. This policy, known as decriminalization, removes the consumer — the marijuana smoker — from the criminal justice system, while maintaining criminal penalties against those who sell or traffic large quantities of the drug.

In 1972, President Richard Nixon's **National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse** recommended that Congress adopt this policy nationally in the United States. Since then, more than a dozen government-appointed commissions in both the U.S. and abroad have recommended similar actions. None of these commissions have endorsed continuing to arrest and jail minor marijuana offenders. Summaries of these studies are available [here](#).

Since 1973, 12 state legislatures — **Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio** and **Oregon** — have enacted versions of marijuana decriminalization. In each of these **states**, marijuana users no longer face jail time (nor in most cases, arrest or criminal records) for the possession or use of small amounts of marijuana. According to national polls, voters **overwhelmingly support** these policies.

In Oregon, voters recently reaffirmed their state's decriminalization law by a 2-1 margin in a statewide referendum.

More than 30 percent of the U.S. population lives under some form of marijuana decriminalization, and according to government and academic studies, these laws have not contributed to an increase in marijuana consumption nor negatively impacted adolescent attitudes toward drug use. Summaries of these findings are available [here](#).

Enforcing marijuana prohibition costs taxpayers an estimated \$10 billion annually and results in the arrest of more than 734,000 individuals per year — far more than the total number of arrestees for all violent crimes combined, including murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. This policy is a tremendous waste of national and state criminal justice resources that should be focused on combating serious and violent crime. In addition, it invites government unnecessarily into areas of our private lives, and needlessly damages the lives and careers of hundreds of thousands of otherwise law-abiding citizens. NORML believes now, as former President Jimmy Carter told Congress in 1977, that: "Penalties against drug use should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself. No where is this more clear than in the laws against the possession of marijuana in private for personal use."



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NORML Talking Points

1. What is NORML and what does the organization stand for?

NORML is a nonprofit, public-interest lobby that for more than 30 years has provided a voice for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition. We represent the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly and believe the recreational and medicinal use of marijuana should no longer be a crime.

NORML supports the removal of all criminal penalties for the private possession and responsible use of marijuana by adults, including the cultivation for personal use, and the casual nonprofit transfers of small amounts. This model, similar to that recommended to Congress by President Nixon's esteemed **Shafer Commission** in 1972, is called "decriminalization."

NORML additionally supports the development of a legally controlled market for marijuana, where consumers could purchase it from a safe, legal and regulated source. This model is referred to as "legalization."

NORML believes that marijuana smoking is not for kids and should only be used **responsibly** by adults. As with alcohol consumption, it must never be an excuse for misconduct or other bad behavior. **Driving** or operating heavy equipment while impaired from marijuana should be prohibited.

NORML strongly supports the right of patients to use **marijuana as a medicine** when their physician recommends it to relieve pain and suffering. NORML has advocated for the legal use of medicinal marijuana since 1972.

Lastly, NORML supports the right of farmers to commercially cultivate the non-psychoactive strain of cannabis known as **hemp** for industrial purposes, such as food and fiber production.

2. What does NORML do?

NORML **lobbies** Congress and state legislatures for more rational and cost-effective marijuana policies. We provide expert witnesses for legislative hearings in support of marijuana reform legislation and to provide testimony to assist defendants charged with marijuana offenses. NORML also serves as a marijuana-law reform advocate with the **media** nationwide, publishes a periodic **newsletter**, and maintains a comprehensive web site, which includes a **50-state legislative tracking system**, where visitors can inform themselves about the issue and send a free fax or an e-mail to their state and federal elected officials. In addition, we maintain a **legal committee** comprised of 350 criminal defense attorneys nationwide who specialize in the defense of individuals charged with marijuana-related offenses. **Because NORML lobbies state and federal elected officials, contributions to the NORML organization are not tax deductible.**

3. What is the NORML Foundation?

Our sister organization, **the NORML Foundation**, is a 501(c)(3) educational, research and legal foundation. Founded in 1997, the NORML Foundation educates the public on marijuana policy through **advertising and media campaigns**. The Foundation distributes a weekly news advisory to more than 1,000 media outlets and 25,000 reform activists; conducts research and publishes special reports; and provides legal support and assistance to victims of the current marijuana laws.

Contributions to the NORML Foundation are tax-deductible.



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4. Who smokes marijuana?

According to recent statistics provided by the federal government, nearly 80 million Americans admit having smoked marijuana. Of these, twenty million Americans smoked marijuana during the past year. The vast majority of marijuana smokers, like most other Americans, are good citizens who work hard, raise families, pay taxes and contribute in a positive way to their communities. They are certainly not part of the crime problem in this country, and it is terribly unfair to continue to treat them as criminals.

Many successful business and professional leaders, including many state and elected federal officials, admit they have smoked marijuana. We must reflect this reality in our state and federal laws, and put to rest the myth that marijuana smoking is a fringe or deviant activity engaged in only by those on the margins of American society. Marijuana smokers are no different from their non-smoking peers, except for their marijuana use.

5. Why should we decriminalize or legalize marijuana?

As President Jimmy Carter acknowledged, *"Penalties against drug use should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself"*. No where is this more clear than in the laws against the possession of marijuana in private for personal use."

Marijuana prohibition needlessly destroys the lives and careers of literally hundreds of thousands of good, hard-working, productive citizens each year in this country. More than 700,000 Americans were arrested on marijuana charges last year, and more than 5 million Americans have been **arrested** for marijuana offenses in the past decade. Almost 90 percent of these arrests are for simple possession, not trafficking or sale. This is a misapplication of the criminal sanction that invites government into areas of our private lives that are inappropriate and wastes valuable law enforcement resources that should be focused on serious and violent crime.

6. What about kids and marijuana?

Marijuana, like other drugs, is not for kids. There are many activities in our society that we permit adults to do, but forbid children, such as motorcycle riding, skydiving, signing contracts, getting married and drinking alcohol or smoking tobacco. However, we do not condone arresting adults who responsibly engage in these activities in order to dissuade our children from doing so. Nor can we justify arresting adult marijuana smokers on the grounds of sending a message to children. Our expectation and hope for young people is that they grow up to be responsible adults, and our obligation to them is to demonstrate what that means.

The NORML Board of Directors has adopted a set of principles called the **"Principles of Responsible Cannabis Use,"** and the first principle is "Cannabis consumption is for adults only; it is irresponsible to provide cannabis to children."

7. Critics claim that marijuana is a "gateway drug." How do you respond to this charge?

There is no conclusive evidence that the effects of marijuana are causally linked to the subsequent use of other illicit drugs. Preliminary animal studies alleging that marijuana "primed" the brain for other drug-taking behavior have not been replicated, nor are they supported by epidemiological human data. Statistically, for every 104 Americans who have tried marijuana, there is only one regular user of cocaine, and less than one user of heroin. Marijuana is clearly a "terminus" rather than a gateway for the overwhelming majority of marijuana smokers.



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For those minority of marijuana smokers who do graduate to harder substances, it is marijuana prohibition -- which forces users to associate with the illicit drug black market -- rather than the use of marijuana itself, that often serves as a doorway to the world of hard drugs. The more users become integrated in an environment where, apart from cannabis, hard drugs can also be obtained, the greater the chances they will experiment with harder drugs.

In Holland, where politicians decided over 25 years ago to separate marijuana from the illicit drug market by permitting coffee shops all over the country to sell small amounts of marijuana to adults, individuals use marijuana and other drugs at rates less than half of their American counterparts.

8. But isn't marijuana addictive?

Substantial research exists regarding marijuana and addiction. While the scientific community has yet to achieve full consensus on this matter, the majority of epidemiological and animal data demonstrate that the reinforcing properties of marijuana in humans is low in comparison to other drugs of abuse, including alcohol and nicotine. According to the U.S. **Institute of Medicine** (IOM), fewer than one in 10 marijuana smokers become regular users of the drug, and most voluntary cease their use after 34 years of age. By comparison, 15 percent of alcohol consumers and 32 percent of tobacco smokers exhibit symptoms of drug dependence.

According to the IOM, observable cannabis withdrawal symptoms are rare and have only been identified under unique patient settings. These remain limited to adolescents in treatment facilities for substance abuse problems, and in a research setting where subjects were given marijuana or THC daily. Compared with the profound physical syndrome of alcohol or heroin withdrawal, marijuana-related withdrawal symptoms are mild and subtle. Symptoms may include restlessness, irritability, mild agitation and sleep disruption. However, for the overwhelming majority of marijuana smokers, these symptoms are not severe enough to re-initiate their use of cannabis.

9. The Supreme Court recently ruled that the U.S. Justice Department, including the Drug Enforcement Agency, may prosecute state-authorized medical marijuana patients for violating the federal Controlled Substances Act. What does this decision mean for seriously ill patients and for the ongoing tension between state and federal laws?

Laws in twelve states (**Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont** and **Washington**) remain in effect despite the Supreme Court's **decision**.

The US Supreme Court decided 6-3 in *Gonzalez v. Raich* that the Justice Department has the authority to prosecute state-authorized medicinal cannabis patients for violating the federal Controlled Substances Act.

The Ninth Federal Circuit Court had previously ruled 2-1 in December 2003, "The intrastate, non-commercial cultivation, possession and use of marijuana for personal medical purposes on the advice of a physician - is, in fact, different in kind from drug trafficking," and issued an injunction barring the US Justice Department from taking legal action against the appellants, California medical cannabis patients Angel McClary Raich and Diane Monson, for violating the federal Controlled Substances Act. The Justice Department appealed that decision to the Supreme Court, which ruled on June 6, 2005.



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The Supreme Court's 2005 decision did not expand the powers of federal law enforcement agencies like the DEA; it only affirmed that they can enforce federal laws prohibiting the use of controlled substances, regardless of state, county, or municipal law. It is not anticipated that federal agents will step up efforts against state-authorized growers, dispensaries, or patients because of this decision. State and local law enforcement officers, who are responsible for the enforcement of state and municipal laws, will most likely continue to honor the democratic decisions that their residents have made about marijuana policy.

Writing for the majority, Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens said that he longs for the day when medicinal cannabis advocates "may be heard in the halls of Congress." NORML's chief complaint is directed at Congress, not at the Court, for allowing the federal/state inconsistency in medical marijuana laws to exist.

10. Why does Congress refuse to reschedule marijuana to permit its use as a medicine under federal law?

Many members of both parties in Congress have confused a public health issue, medical marijuana, with the politics of the War on Drugs. In doing so, they have denied an effective medication to the seriously ill and dying.

Pending legislation **H.R. 2087**, on this specific proposal.

11. Didn't Congress vote on a measure to prevent the federal prosecution of medical marijuana patients in 2005?

On June 15, 2005, the House voted 264 to 161 against a bi-partisan measure, sponsored by Reps. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) and Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), that would have barred the US Department of Justice (DOJ) from targeting patients who use marijuana medicinally in accordance with the laws of their states.

The 161 House votes in favor of the patient-protection provision was the highest total ever recorded in a Congressional floor vote to liberalize marijuana laws. Of those who voted in support of the Hinchey/Rohrabacher medical marijuana amendment, 15 were Republicans and 128 were Democrats. The House's only Independent Congressman also voted in favor of the amendment.

Many Congressional battles are won only after several failed attempts. Please **contact** your representative now and urge their support for federal medical marijuana legislation.

12. Critics of the medical use of marijuana say (1) there are traditional medications to help patients and marijuana is not needed; and, (2) permitting the medical use of marijuana sends the wrong message to kids. How do you respond to these concerns?

For many patients, traditional medications do work and they do not require or desire medical marijuana. However, for a significant number of serious ill patients, including patients suffering from AIDS, cancer, multiple sclerosis and chronic pain among others, traditional medications do not provide symptomatic relief as effectively as medicinal cannabis. These patients must not be branded as criminals or forced to suffer needlessly in pain.

Dronabinol (trade name Marinol) is a legal, synthetic THC alternative to cannabis. Nevertheless, many patients claim they find minimal relief from it, particularly when compared to inhaled marijuana. The active ingredient in Marinol, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, is only one of the compounds isolated in marijuana that appears to be medically beneficial to patients. Other



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compounds such as cannabidiol (CBD), an anti-convulsant, and cannabichromine (CBC), an anti-inflammatory, are unavailable in Marinol, and patients only have access to their therapeutic properties by using cannabis.

Patients prescribed Marinol frequently complain of its high psychoactivity. This is because patients consume the drug orally. Once swallowed, Marinol passes through the liver, where a significant proportion is converted into other chemicals. One of these, the 11-hydroxy metabolite, is four to five times more potent than THC and greatly increases the likelihood of a patient experiencing an adverse psychological reaction. In contrast, inhaled marijuana doesn't cause significant levels of the 11-hydroxy metabolite to appear in the blood.

Marinol's oral administration also delays the drug from taking peak effect until two to four hours after dosing. A 1999 report by the US **Institute of Medicine** (IOM) concluded: "It is well recognized that Marinol's oral route of administration hampers its effectiveness because of slow absorption and patients' desire for more control over dosing. ... In contrast, inhaled marijuana is rapidly absorbed." In a series of US state studies in the 1980s, cancer patients given a choice between using inhaled marijuana and oral THC overwhelmingly chose cannabis.

As to the message we are sending to kids, NORML hopes the message we are sending is that we would not deny any effective medication to the seriously ill and dying. We routinely permit cancer patients to self-administer morphine in cancer wards all across the country; we allow physicians to prescribe amphetamines for weight loss and to use cocaine in nose and throat operations. Each of these drugs can be abused on the street, yet no one is suggesting we are sending the wrong message to kids by permitting their medical use.

13. Don't alcohol and tobacco use already cause enough damage to society? Why should we legalize another intoxicant?

While there are indeed health and societal problems due to the use of alcohol and nicotine, these negative consequences would be amplified if consumption of either substance were prohibited.

Marijuana is already the third most popular recreational drug in America, despite harsh laws against its use. Millions of Americans smoke it responsibly. Our public policies should reflect this reality, not deny it.

In addition, marijuana is far less dangerous than alcohol or tobacco. It fails to inflict the types of serious health consequences these two legal drugs cause. Around 50,000 people die each year from alcohol poisoning. Similarly, more than 400,000 deaths each year are attributed to tobacco smoking. By comparison, marijuana is nontoxic and cannot cause death by overdose. According to the prestigious European medical journal, *The Lancet*, "The smoking of cannabis, even long-term, is not harmful to health. It would be reasonable to judge cannabis as less of a threat than alcohol or tobacco."

No one is suggesting we encourage more drug use; simply that we stop arresting responsible marijuana smokers. In recent years, we have significantly reduced the prevalence of drunk driving and tobacco smoking. We have not achieved this by prohibiting the use of alcohol and tobacco or by targeting and arresting adults who use alcohol and tobacco responsibly, but through honest educational campaigns. We should apply these same principles to the responsible consumption of marijuana. The negative consequences primarily associated with marijuana -- such as an arrest or jail time -- are the result of the criminal prohibition of cannabis, not the use of marijuana itself.



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14. What is industrial hemp? How does it differ from marijuana?

Hemp is a distinct variety of the plant species *cannabis sativa* L. It is a tall, slender fibrous plant similar to flax or kenaf. Farmers worldwide have harvested the crop for the past 12,000 years for fiber and food, and Popular Mechanics once boasted that over 25,000 environmentally friendly products could be derived from hemp.

Unlike marijuana, hemp contains only minute (less than 1%) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. In addition, hemp possesses a high percentage of the compound cannabidiol (CBD), which has been shown to block the effects of THC. For these reasons, many botanists have dubbed industrial hemp "anti- marijuana."

More than 30 industrialized nations commercially grow hemp, including England and Canada. The European Union subsidizes farmers to grow the crop, which is legally recognized as a commercial crop by the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Nevertheless, US law forbids farmers from growing hemp without a federal license, and has discouraged all commercial hemp production since the 1950s. NORML is working to allow American farmers to once again have legal access to this agricultural commodity.

15. How can I help?

The most important step you can take is to **contact your elected officials** at all levels of government (local, state and federal), and let them know you oppose arresting responsible marijuana smokers. As a constituent, you hold special influence over the politicians who represent your district. It is critical you let them know how you feel.

Because the marijuana smoking community remains largely "in the closet" and is all too often invisible politically, our core constituency currently exercises far less political power than our numbers would otherwise suggest. The only way to overcome this handicap is for more of us to take an active role, and routinely contact our elected officials.

A majority of the American public opposes sending marijuana smokers to jail, and 3 out of 4 support the medical use of marijuana. Yet many elected officials remain fearful that if they support these reform proposals, they will be perceived as "soft" on crime and drugs and defeated at the next election.

Tell your elected officials that you know the difference between marijuana and more dangerous drugs and between marijuana smoking and violent crime, and that you do not support spending billions of dollars per year incarcerating nonviolent marijuana offenders.

To make that easy, NORML has a program on our web site that will identify your state and federal elected officials, and provide a sample letter that you can **fax to Congress** or e-mail to state legislators.

Additionally, we encourage you to join NORML and help us with this fight for personal freedom. We depend on contributions from private individuals to fund our educational and lobbying campaign, and our ability to move reform efforts forward is partially a question of resources. Please join with us and let's end marijuana prohibition, once and for all.



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Getting Letters to the Editor Published (NORML Activist Training)

Letters to the editor are a cost-effective means of promoting public health alternatives to a punitive drug war. Many politicians are not leaders, but rather followers of opinion polls. Educating the general public on the drug war's collateral damage is critical to the reform effort. In addition to informing the public debate, letters to the editor are read by elected officials, who monitor the content of their local newspapers to keep track of constituent concerns.

There is a wealth of information on getting letters to the editor published at <http://www.mapinc.org/resource/>. NORML activists have had a lot of success by using the Media Awareness Project (MAP) at <http://www.mapinc.org> in conjunction with <http://www.drugwarfacts.org/>. For those of you unfamiliar with MAP, print articles related to drug policy are sent in by volunteers and archived at <http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/>. Contact information for editors is provided, thereby making it easy to submit letters to the editor via email.

- In general, letters written in response to editorials are more likely to be published than letters written in response to wire stories (does not apply to major news stories). Avoid scathing criticism. Civility will increase the likelihood of your views being published.
- Using counter-intuitive arguments increases the likelihood of publication.
- Respond to major news stories while they are still hot. Nonetheless, investing time in editing pays off. Always spell-check your letter.
- Local newspapers are far more likely to publish letters than out of state papers (does not apply to major newspapers)
- Adding local relevance helps, especially when replying to an AP wire story (use the MAP search functions) Repeat information in the article if necessary.
- Including credible statistics to make a point helps, especially when government statistics are used (see <http://www.drugwarfacts.org> or <http://www.briancbennett.com> for cross-referenced statistics).
- Write with a specific target audience in mind, i.e., soccer moms, fiscal conservatives, etc.
- Tailor letters for specific newspapers. If you're going to write to the *"Wall Street Journal"* you can be pedantic/sophisticated, but you better dumb it down for certain papers. You're always better off pre-empting the editors.
- Use an organization affiliation if possible.
- Most newspapers require that letters submitted be exclusive. When recycling letters make slight edits. Having the exact same letter published in both the *"Chicago Tribune"* and the *"Chicago Sun"* on the same day would not be good. Having the exact same letter simultaneously published in Alabama and Idaho should not pose a problem.
- It's important to keep track of when you last sent a particular newspaper a letter. Likewise, avoid sending the same letter to the same newspaper twice. Anything that indicates you've got a system in place will hurt your chances of getting published.
- Last but definitely not least, visit the newspaper's website and find out what their policy is for publishing letters. In general, letters should be under 250 words. The shorter the letter, the greater the chance of it being published. Most papers will edit letters down to less than 200 words anyway. You're better off aiming for roughly 200 words and sticking to one or two key points.



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How to Mount an Effective Letter Writing Campaign

Letter writing campaigns to the media and elected officials are an integral part of every activist's toolkit. As few as a dozen letters can alert a legislator to begin monitoring an issue or change an editor's mind. In addition, well-written letters stimulate debate among politicians and the public. By devoting a few hours a month to writing effective letters, NORML chapters can effectively educate, lobby and forge key relationships with politicians, the media and the public.

Arguably, **if every individual who supported marijuana-law reform wrote to their elected officials and local media, the sheer volume of mail would force politicians to take notice.** Since this isn't the case, it is vital that those who do understand the fundamentals of writing an effective letter. Below are some proven tips to follow.

Writing to the Media

One of the most effective, cost-efficient ways to educate the voters and influence public officials is to consistently publish letters to the editor in national and regional newspapers. The opinion page is typically the most widely read section of the newspaper, and letters to the editor are usually clipped and saved by politicians. Moreover, letters to the editor show editors, reporters, and local representatives what the "hot" issues are, thereby encouraging both greater news coverage and political debate of those topics.

Newspapers frequently publish stories regarding marijuana. Your chapter should view each of these stories as an opportunity to respond. Each letter to the editor you publish is an opportunity to promote your message as well as increase the public awareness of NORML and your local chapter. To better your chances of getting published, here are some tips.

10 Steps to Getting Your Letter to the Editor Published

1. **Know your paper's policies.** Be aware of editorial guidelines. Most newspapers have set policies regarding letters' form, length and content, and almost all require letter writers to include their personal contact information. (This is so they can confirm authorship.) If a paper does not publish its guidelines on the editorial page, call the newspaper directly and speak with the editor of the opinion page. (You can also use this conversation as an opportunity to educate the editor about the issue before sending your letter.)
2. **Monitor editors' political leanings.** Familiarize yourself with your paper's editorial slant (i.e. conservative or liberal), and hone your letter appropriately. For example, if you are targeting a conservative paper, highlight how marijuana prohibition runs contrary to republican principles like limited government. If you are targeting a liberal paper, mention how drug war spending limits the availability of federal funds for programs like education and the environment.
3. **Be timely.** Arguably the most decisive factor in whether a letter gets printed is the timeliness of the subject matter. Letters that respond to a recent article, editorial, and/or current event are most likely to be published.
4. **Be direct.** Many editors will not consider letters longer than 300 words. Do not generalize; your letter must be concise (three paragraphs or less) informative and compelling.
5. **Get personal.** Editors are more willing to publish a letter that demonstrates local relevance to the community. Include local statistics and personal stories that will make an impact on your newspaper's readers. For example, if you are writing a letter regarding marijuana arrests, highlight the arrest statistics in your own community. Or, if you are writing about medical marijuana, cite a relative or friend who is ill and could potentially benefit from it
6. **Don't prejudice yourself.** Avoid statements like "as a marijuana smoker." The key of a successful letter is to get readers to focus on the message rather than the messenger.



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7. **Don't make claims you can't back up.** Provide citations for your arguments, and never use statements you can't back up. You can write pages full of truths, but if one fact is incorrect readers may dismiss (or forget) the bulk of your piece, and attack you on (or remember) the point you got wrong.
8. **Name names.** If a letter to the editor mentions a representative or senator by name, they will see it. Elected representatives care about how they are being perceived in their district and pay close attention to letters asking them to take legislative action.
9. **Encourage others to take a stand.** An effective letter informs those who agree with your position how to get further involved (e.g., support NORML) and urges readers to let their elected officials know their views.
10. **Be Reasonable and Courteous.** You can be animated and assertive without sounding like an extremist or being rude. Think about what you are saying. Write the letter, set it down, and then read it a few hours later. Let others read your letter before sending it.

Writing To Your Elected Officials

Ultimately, there is only one way to persuade politicians that marijuana-law reform is necessary; their constituents must demand it. A powerfully written letter (not e-mail) is one way to do so.

When writing your elected officials, follow essentially the same steps as if you were drafting a letter to the editor. Keep your letter short and to the point: let your elected officials know exactly how you feel on this issue. (Sample and pre-written letters are available on NORML's website at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/home/>.) If you are typing your letter (which is advisable), include a handwritten postscript (e.g., Thanks for giving consideration to this issue.) as well as your home address so that the recipient understands that you are a constituent.

Most importantly, be sure to close your correspondence with a strong statement telling your representative that you will weigh his or her response in the coming election. (Remember, it's just as important to let your elected officials know when you agree with their stance as when you disagree.) A conclusion such as: "Please let me know how you would vote on this issue. Marijuana-law reform is important to me and I will take your position into consideration at the next election" is ideal. Also, if you have previously had a letter to the editor published, be sure to clip it and send it along.

Lastly, do not be discouraged by unfavorable responses. Many politicians remain uneducated or ignorant about marijuana-law reform or mistakenly believe that Americans favor current policies. However, the more that you and other like-minded friends, family and co-workers communicate with your public officials, the sooner they will change their positions. Try to appeal to common ideologies (e.g., opposition to wasteful government spending, concern over adolescent drug use, misuse of valuable law enforcement resources, etc.) and do not hesitate to write follow-up letters. For more information, please visit the "Contact Elected Officials" section of the NORML website at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/home/>.



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10 Steps to Getting Press - A Tip Sheet from the Drug Policy Alliance

1. **Identify what's "newsworthy."** There is a big difference between an issue and a news story. We can assist the media in covering issues that are important to us by letting them know when a related "story" emerges. What makes something newsworthy? Controversy, anniversaries, civil disobedience, human interest, strange bedfellows, superlatives (first, biggest, etc.) If a topic isn't newsworthy - no matter how important - they probably won't cover it.
2. **Develop written materials.** The first thing a reporter is likely to ask when you call them to pitch a story is: "Do you have anything in writing?" Help make their job as easy as possible by developing brief, easy-to-read materials. Especially important is a 1-2 page media advisory or press release with details of an event or news story. The style and content should resemble a simple newspaper story, with strong headlines, facts and quotes. When possible, other background materials can be helpful, including fact sheets, spokespeople bios or report summaries.
3. **Develop a targeted media list.** It is important to think about which reporters will be interested in your story. Are they reporters who cover health? Politics? Entertainment? Is it a local or a national story? Is it a story that's good for newspaper, radio and/or television? From there, develop a list of reporters' names and numbers to call.
4. **Be by a fax machine and / or email.** In order to quickly send your written materials to a reporter, it is important to be close to a fax machine or email when making pitch calls. If a reporter wants to see something right away, it will not help to send them something several hours later or the next day.
5. **Identify strategic spokespeople.** The messenger is often just as important as the message when it comes to the media. A doctor or patient talking about the importance of medical marijuana will probably be more effective than a college student in perfect health, for example. It is also crucial that spokespeople are articulate and knowledgeable on the issue, and easily reachable by reporters on deadline. (Not having a cell phone can sometimes mean not being included in a story!!) Having experience speaking to the press is always a plus. Remember - reporters are not your friends. Be careful and strategic when doing interviews.
6. **Practice your telephone pitch.** Reporters get hundreds of calls a day. What's likely to make a reporter not hang up on you, or immediately delete your message, is if you develop a well-focused, 30-second pitch that highlights the essence of your news story. Once you hook them, you can describe in more detail why you are calling and how you can get them more information. Practice leaving messages on your own answering machine. Don't forget to leave your phone number if you leave a message.
7. **Never lie or exaggerate.** It is important that reporters feel they can trust the information you give them. If they find out you are lying or exaggerating, it will greatly hurt your chances of ever being able to pitch them a story again. Usually the facts are strong enough to make a case for a good story.
8. **Don't take no for an answer.** Pitching is not dating. If a reporter says no, try another reporter, or call them again when you have a different story. If you get one out of ten reporters to write about your story, that is a huge success! Remember, one reporter can represent thousands of readers, listeners or viewers.
9. **Use the media to get more media.** If a good article comes out on your issue, send it to other reporters who might also be interested. Oftentimes newspapers will be more interested in—op-ed pieces if the topic has been in the recent news. Articles and op-eds can also lead to radio interviews, and local stories can lead to national stories, if they're seen by the right editors / producers.
10. **Say thank you.** Developing friendly relationships with reporters is helpful when trying to pitch news stories. If a reporter writes a story you like, call them up and say thank you. They appreciate it, and will be more likely to return your phone call the next time around.



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Macomb County NORML By-Laws (an example)

BYLAWS OF NORML of Macomb County (as a directorship corporation)

ARTICLE I OFFICES

1.01 Principal Office. The principal office of the corporation shall be at such place within the county of Macomb in the state of Michigan as the board of directors may determine from time to time.

1.02 Other Offices. The board of directors may establish other offices in or outside the county of Macomb in the state of Michigan.

ARTICLE II MEMBERS

There shall be no members.

ARTICLE III BOARD

3.01 General Powers. The business, property, and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by the board of directors.

3.02 Number. There shall be not less than three (3) nor more than seven (7) directors on the board as shall be fixed from time to time by the board of directors.

3.03 Tenure. Each director of the Corporation shall hold office until the director's death, resignation, or removal.

3.04 Resignation. Any director may resign at any time by providing written notice to the Corporation. The resignation will be effective on receipt of the notice or at a later time designated in the notice. A successor shall be appointed as provided in section 3.06 of the bylaws.

3.05 Removal. Any director may be removed with cause by the remaining directors on the board.

3.06 Board Vacancies. A vacancy on the board may be filled with a person selected by the remaining directors of the board.

3.07 Annual Meeting. An annual meeting shall be held each year on the second Sunday of April. If the annual meeting is not held at that time, the board shall cause the meeting to be held as soon thereafter as is convenient.

3.08 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the board may be held at the time and place as determined by resolution of the board without notice other than the resolution.

3.09 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the board may be called by the president or any two directors at a time and place as determined by those persons authorized to call special meetings. Notice of the time and place of special meetings shall be given to each director in any manner at least three days before the meeting.

3.10 Statement of Purpose. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the board need be specified in the notice for that meeting.



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3.11 Waiver of Notice. The attendance of a director at a board meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of the meeting, except where a director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. In addition, the director may submit a signed waiver of notice that shall constitute a waiver of notice of the meeting.

3.12 Meeting by Telephone or Similar Equipment. A director may participate in a meeting by conference telephone or any similar communications equipment through which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this section constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

3.13 Quorum. A majority of the directors then in office constitutes a quorum for the transaction of any business at any meeting of the board. Actions voted on by a majority of directors present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall constitute authorized actions of the board.

3.14 Consent to Corporate Actions. Any action required or permitted to be taken pursuant to authorization of the board may be taken without a meeting if, before or after the action, all directors consent to the action in writing. Written consents shall be filed with the minutes of the Board's proceeding.

ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES

4.01 General Powers. The board, by resolution adopted by a vote of a majority of its directors, may designate one or more committees, each committee consisting of one or more directors. The board may also designate one or more directors as alternate committee members who may replace an absent or disqualified member at a committee meeting. If a committee member is absent or disqualified from voting, then members present at a meeting who are not disqualified from voting may, whether or not they constitute a quorum, unanimously appoint an alternate committee member to act at the committee meeting in place of the absent or disqualified member. All committees designated by the board shall serve at the pleasure of the board. A committee designated by the board may exercise any powers of the board in managing the corporation's business and affairs, to the extent provided by resolution of the board. However, no committee shall have the power to

- (a) amend the articles of incorporation;
- (b) adopt an agreement of merger or consolidation;
- (c) amend the bylaws of the corporation;
- (d) fill vacancies on the board; or
- (e) fix compensation of the directors for serving on the board or on a committee.

4.02 Meetings. Committees shall meet as directed by the board, and their meetings shall be governed by the rules provided in article III for meetings of the board. Minutes shall be recorded at each committee meeting and shall be presented to the board.

4.03 Consent to Committee Actions. Any action required or permitted to be taken pursuant to authorization of a committee may be taken without a meeting if, before or after the action, all members of the committee consent to the action in writing. Written consents shall be filed with the minutes of the committee's proceedings.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

5.01 Number. The officers of the corporation shall be appointed by the board. The officers shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer. There may also be a chairperson, vice president, and such other officers as the board deems appropriate. The president shall be a voting member of the board. Two or more offices may be held by the same person, but such person shall not execute, acknowledge, or verify an instrument in more than one capacity if the instrument is required by law or by the president or by the board to be executed, acknowledged, or verified by two or more officers.



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5.02 Term of Office. Each officer shall hold office for the term appointed and until a successor is appointed and qualified. An officer may resign at any time by providing written notice to the corporation. Notice of resignation is effective on receipt or at a later time designated in the notice.

5.03 Removal. An officer appointed by the board may be removed with or without cause by vote of a majority of the board. The removal shall be without prejudice to the person's contract rights, if any. Appointment to an office does not of itself create contract rights.

5.04 Vacancies. A vacancy in any office for any reason may be filled by the board.

5.05 President. The president shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation and shall have authority over the general control and management of the business and affairs of the corporation. The president shall have power to appoint or discharge employees, agents, or independent contractors, to determine their duties, and to fix their compensation. The president shall sign all corporate documents and agreements on behalf of the corporation, unless the president or the board instructs that the signing be done with or by some other officer, agent, or employee. The president shall see that all actions taken by the board are executed and shall perform all other duties incident to the office. This is subject, however, to the president's right and the right of the board to delegate any specific power to any other officer of the corporation.

5.06 Vice President. The vice president, if any, shall have the power to perform duties that may be assigned by the president or the board. If the president is absent or unable to perform his or her duties, the vice president shall perform the president's duties until the board directs otherwise. The vice president shall perform all duties incident to the office.

5.07 Chairperson. The chairperson, if elected, shall preside at all board meetings. The chairperson shall have the power to perform duties as may be assigned by the board. If the president is absent or unable to perform his or her duties, the chairperson shall perform the president's duties until the board directs otherwise. The chairperson shall perform all duties incident to the office.

5.08 Secretary. The secretary shall (a) keep minutes of board meetings; (b) be responsible for providing notice to each [member or] director as required by law, the articles of incorporation, or these bylaws; (c) be the custodian of corporate records; (d) keep a register of the names and addresses of each [member,] officer and director; and (e) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the president or the board.

5.09 Treasurer. The treasurer shall (a) have charge and custody over corporate funds and securities; (b) keep accurate books and records of corporate receipts and disbursements; (c) deposit all moneys and securities received by the corporation at such depositories in the corporation's name that may be designated by the board; (d) complete all required corporate filings; and (e) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the president or the board.

ARTICLE VI CORPORATE DOCUMENT PROCEDURE

All corporate documents (including stocks, bonds, agreements, insurance and annuity contracts, qualified and nonqualified deferred compensation plans, checks, notes, disbursements, loans, and other debt obligations) shall not be signed by any officer, designated agent, or attorney-in-fact unless authorized by the board or by these bylaws.

ARTICLE VII INDEMNIFICATION

7.01 Nonderivative Actions. Subject to all of the other provisions of this article, the corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party to, any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding. This includes any civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative proceeding, whether formal or informal (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation). Such indemnification shall apply only to a person who was or is a director or officer of the corporation or who was or



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is serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, whether for profit or not for profit. The person shall be indemnified and held harmless against expenses (including attorney fees), judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding, if the person acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation. With respect to any criminal action or proceeding, the person must have had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, or conviction or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not by itself create a presumption that (a) the person did not act in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, or (b) with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, the person had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

7.02 Derivative Actions. Subject to all of the provisions of this article, the corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to, any threatened, pending, or completed action or suit by or in the right of the corporation to procure a judgment in its favor because (a) the person was or is a director or officer of the corporation, or (b) the person was or is serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, whether or not for profit. The person shall be indemnified and held harmless against expenses (including actual and reasonable attorney fees) and amounts paid in settlement incurred by the person in connection with such action or suit if the person acted in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation. However, indemnification shall not be made for any claim, issue, or matter in which the person has been found liable to the corporation unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought has determined on application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all circumstances of the case, the person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification for the expenses that the court considers proper.

7.03 Expenses of Successful Defense. To the extent that a person has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in sections 7.01 or 7.02 of this article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in the action, suit, or proceeding, the person shall be indemnified against expenses (including actual and reasonable attorney fees) incurred in connection with the action and in any proceeding brought to enforce the mandatory indemnification provided by this article.

7.04 Contract Right; Limitation on Indemnity. The right to indemnification conferred in this article shall be a contract right and shall apply to services of a director or officer as an employee or agent of the corporation as well as in such person's capacity as a director or officer. Except as provided in section 7.03 of this article, the corporation shall have no obligations under this article to indemnify any person in connection with any proceeding, or part thereof, initiated by such person without authorization by the board.

7.05 Determination That Indemnification Is Proper. Any indemnification under sections 7.01 or 7.02 of this article (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the corporation only as authorized in the specific case. The corporation must determine that indemnification of the person is proper in the circumstances because the person has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in sections 7.01 or 7.02, whichever is applicable. Such determination shall be made in any of the following ways:

- (a) By a majority vote of a quorum of the board consisting of directors who were not parties to such action, suit, or proceeding.
- (b) If the quorum described in clause (a) above is not obtainable, then by a committee of directors who are not parties to the action. The committee shall consist of not less than two disinterested directors.
- (c) By independent legal counsel in a written opinion.



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7.06 Proportionate Indemnity. If a person is entitled to indemnification under sections 7.01 or 7.02 of this article for a portion of expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, but not for the total amount, the corporation shall indemnify the person for the portion of the expenses, judgments, penalties, fines, or amounts paid in settlement for which the person is entitled to be indemnified.

7.07 Expense Advance. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit, or proceeding described in sections 7.01 or 7.02 of this article may be paid by the corporation in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the person involved to repay the expenses, if it is ultimately determined that the person is not entitled to be indemnified by the corporation. The undertaking shall be an unlimited general obligation of the person on whose behalf advances are made, but need not be secured.

7.08 Non-exclusivity of Rights. The indemnification or advancement of expenses provided under this article is not exclusive of other rights to which a person seeking indemnification or advancement of expenses may be entitled under a contractual arrangement with the corporation. However, the total amount of expenses advanced or indemnified from all sources combined shall not exceed the amount of actual expenses incurred by the person seeking indemnification or advancement of expenses.

7.09 Indemnification of Employees and Agents of the Corporation. The corporation may, to the extent authorized from time to time by the board, grant rights to indemnification and to the advancement of expenses to any employee or agent of the corporation to the fullest extent of the provisions of this article with respect to the indemnification and advancement of expenses of directors and officers of the corporation.

7.10 Former Directors and Officers. The indemnification provided in this article continues for a person who has ceased to be a director or officer and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

7.11 Insurance. The corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who (a) was or is a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, or (b) was or is serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise. Such insurance may protect against any liability asserted against the person and incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the corporation would have power to indemnify against such liability under this article or the laws of the state of Michigan.

7.12 Changes in Michigan Law. If there are any changes in the Michigan statutory provisions applicable to the corporation and relating to the subject matter of this article, then the indemnification to which any person shall be entitled shall be determined by such changed provisions, but only to the extent that any such change permits the corporation to provide broader indemnification rights than such provisions permitted the corporation to provide before any such change.



Michigan NORML
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**ARTICLE VIII
COMPENSATION**

When authorized by the board, a person shall be reasonably compensated for services rendered to the corporation as an officer, director, employee, agent, or independent contractor, except as prohibited by these bylaws.

**ARTICLE IX
FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the corporation shall end on April 19th.

**ARTICLE X
AMENDMENTS**

The board of directors at any regular or special meeting may amend or repeal these bylaws, or adopt new bylaws by vote of a majority of the directors, if notice setting forth the terms of the proposal has been given in accordance with any notice requirement for such meeting of the board.

EXAMPLE

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH
BUREAU OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

Date Received	(FOR BUREAU USE ONLY)
	This document is effective on the date filed, unless a subsequent effective date within 90 days after received date is stated in the document.

Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip Code

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Document will be returned to the name and address you enter above.
If left blank document will be mailed to the registered office.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
For use by Domestic Nonprofit Corporations
(Please read information and instructions on the last page)

Pursuant to the provisions of Act 162, Public Acts of 1982, the undersigned corporation executes the following Articles:

ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation is:

ARTICLE II

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

ARTICLE III

1. The corporation is organized upon a _____ basis.
(Stock or Nonstock)

2. If organized on a stock basis, the total number of shares which the corporation has authority to issue is _____ . If the shares are, or are to be, divided into classes, the designation of each class, the number of shares in each class, and the relative rights, preferences and limitations of the shares of each class are as follows:

Use space below for additional Articles or for continuation of previous Articles. Please identify any Article being continued or added. Attach additional pages if needed.

I, (We), the incorporator(s) sign my (our) name(s) this _____ day of _____, _____.

Name of person or organization
remitting fees:

Preparer's name and business
telephone number:

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. This form may be used to draft your Articles of Incorporation. A document required or permitted to be filed under the act cannot be filed unless it contains the minimum information required by the act. The format provided contains only the minimal information required to make the document fileable and may not meet your needs. This is a legal document and agency staff cannot provide legal advice.
 2. Submit one original of this document. Upon filing, the document will be added to the records of the Bureau of Commercial Services. The original will be returned to your registered office address, unless you enter a different address in the box on the front of this document.

Since this document will be maintained on electronic format, it is important that the filing be legible. Documents with poor black and white contrast, or otherwise illegible, will be rejected.
 3. This document is to be used pursuant to the provisions of Act 162, P.A. of 1982, by one or more persons for the purpose of forming a domestic nonprofit corporation.
 4. Article II - The purpose for which the corporation is organized must be included. It is not sufficient to state that the corporation may engage in any activity within the purposes for which corporations may be organized under the Act.
 5. Article III - The corporation must be organized on a stock or nonstock basis. Complete Article III(2) or III(3) as appropriate, but not both. Real property assets are items such as land and buildings. Personal property assets are items such as cash, equipment, fixtures, etc. The dollar value and description must be included. If there is no real and/or personal property, write in "none".
 6. A domestic nonprofit corporation may be formed on either a membership or directorship basis. A membership corporation entitles the members to vote in determining corporate action. If organized on a directorship basis the corporation may have members but they may not vote and corporate action is determined by the Board of Directors.
 7. Article IV - A post office box may not be designated as the address of the registered office.
 8. Article V - The Act requires one or more incorporators. Educational corporations are required to have at least three (3) incorporators. The address(es) should include a street number and name (or other designation), city and state.
 9. This document is effective on the date endorsed "filed" by the Bureau. A later effective date, no more than 90 days after the date of delivery, may be stated as an additional article.
 10. The Articles must be signed in ink by each incorporator listed in Article V. However, if there are 3 or more incorporators, they may, by resolution adopted at the organizational meeting by a written instrument, designate one of them to sign the Articles of Incorporation on behalf of all of them. In such event, these Articles of Incorporation must be accompanied by a copy of the resolution duly certified by the acting secretary at the organizational meeting and a statement must be placed in the articles incorporating that resolution into them.
- 11. FEES:** Make remittance payable to the State of Michigan. Include corporation name on check or money order.

FILING AND FRANCHISE FEE **\$20.00**

To submit by mail:

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth
Bureau of Commercial Services
Corporation Division
7150 Harris Drive
P.O. Box 30054
Lansing, MI 48909

To submit in person:

2501 Woodlake Circle Drive
Okemos, MI
Telephone: (517) 241-6470

Fees may be paid by VISA or Mastercard when delivered in person to our office.

MICH-ELF (Michigan Electronic Filing System):

First Time Users: Call (517) 241-6420, or visit our website at <http://www.cis.state.mi.us/bcs/corp/>
Customer with MICH-ELF Filer Account: Send document to (517) 241-9845



For more information please contact:

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