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CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Draft LTCCP 2009-19

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Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Monday 11 May 2009 and Monday 18 May 2009.

Are you completing this submission:

On behalf of a group or organisation

If you are representing, how many people do you represent?

around 140 in Christchurch at last count

Name:

Paula Lambert

Organisation Name:

Chch Coalition for Cannabis Law Reform

Organisation Role:

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Date:

16 April 2009

Your Submission:

Prohibition of cannabis is not working, more humane alternatives to criminalisation are needed to deal with the issue effectively.

All cannabis users should not be criminalised just because a minority may have problems with substance use/abuse. This leads to ridiculous costs and burdens on our justice system. If people have problems with heavy cannabis use/abuse they should be accommodated by the health system, not criminalised through the prison system.

Although central government also needs to look at alternatives, our local government could lead with local initiatives. Anything which positively influences the local black market and reduces gang influence with young people would be an improvement than more punitive treatment of cannabis users.

In conclusion, in light of all the information we would like the CCC to:

1. Adopt a resolution to consider the issue and how it affects Christchurch.
2. Set up a working party to consider other approaches adopted in some countries and US states where cannabis law has been relaxed.
3. To seriously consider Christchurch as an experimental Prohibition Free Zone whereby people are allowed small amounts - up to an ounce - in their possession, without penalty.

Most recent recommended reading:

April 2, 2009

Drug Decriminalization in Portugal: Lessons for Creating Fair and Successful
Drug Policies

http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=10080

34page pdf: http://www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/greenwald_whitepaper.pdf

April 7, 2009

5 Years After: Portugal's Drug Decriminalization Policy Shows Positive
Results

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=portugal-drug-decriminalization>