

Jim Sampson
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Dear Cathy Giessel, Senator:

I was delighted to see SB 128, establishing the marijuana education and treatment fund. Working in this direction is long overdue.

I worked 31 years (1973 – 2004) with the Anchorage School District, almost all of that time at the High School level and witnessed first hand the debilitating effects of marijuana on our youth. I realized early in my career that marijuana caused significant deficits in ability often requiring special program to try and remediate. I eventually could identify marijuana users by their seeming inability to achieve any their stated goals from one semester to the next. I became familiar with a few students who began using marijuana in upper elementary school, more who became chronic users in middle school and a larger group who did not use until high school.

During the past two years I began reviewing research on marijuana and the undeveloped brain. I read the study begun in 1972-73 in Dunedin, New Zealand led by Terrie Moffitt and Avshalom Caspi, psychologists who hold dual appointments at Duke, NC and at King's College London and was disheartened to find the debilitating effect of marijuana in the lives of young users is far worse than I suspected. The research indicates many of those students permanently lost an average of 8 IQ points (<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120827152039.htm>).

More research out of the University of Montreal indicates our youth who use marijuana increase psychotic-like experiences by 159% (<https://neurosciencenews.com/psychosis-teen-marijuana-7034/>). And more research is coming out indicating our youth must be taught to avoid marijuana.

Thank you for pre-filing SB128 and I hope to support its progress through the legislative process.

Sincerely,


James E. Sampson
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