



American Academy of Pediatrics  
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Vermont Chapter

January 16, 2018

Honorable Governor Phil Scott  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05609

Dear Governor Scott:

The Vermont Medical Society and American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter are unified in our disappointment in the actions of the legislature with the passage of H.511. Especially distressing is this action taking place just before the Marijuana Advisory Commission, which you created, releases its final report.

The bill before you now, H.511, allows for marijuana to be grown at home and for families to have enough “personal” marijuana available in their homes for 25 ounces or 1375 joints (with possession of an ounce, and growing of two mature plants, which at a minimum yield  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a pound each). Not to mention that this bill fails to set any limits on the amount of marijuana that could be produced and stored. That is a tremendous amount of product on hand for “personal consumption” without strong guidelines around safe storage or funding for education countering the “marijuana is safe” message that legalization will inevitably give to youth.

Over the past two years, legislators have heard from teachers, pediatricians, substance abuse counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and the police – all professionals who have daily experience with the hazards of marijuana use – and all who advise against this bill and recommend caution when moving toward legalizing marijuana. Vermont should learn from other states’ mistakes, so that we can make wise decisions about marijuana policy.

According to the 2016 VT Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Report, 2016 became the first year that drug -related automobile deaths outnumbered alcohol related automobile deaths. When coupled with the fact that there is currently no additional support or roadside test available for our police to help make roads safer from impaired drivers, that is a very disheartening trend.

On behalf of the Vermont Medical Society and American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter, we hope that you will stand by your promise to keep marijuana from affecting the health of our state’s children and the safety of our Vermont roads. With the absence of any prevention or education funding and the increase in availability and normalization, we fear this will be a step backwards for the health and wellbeing of Vermont families. We ask that you respect the time and work of your commission, and wait for their recommendations before signing any bill in to law.

Sincerely,

Carl “Trey” Dobson, M.D.  
VMS President

Jill Rinehart, M.D., FAAP  
AAPVT Chapter President