

Calif. police reluctant to set pot rules

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

In 2010, as Colorado lawmakers were creating America's first state-licensed and regulated medical marijuana industry, fellow police officers at a Colorado Drug Investigators Association conference jeered a state law enforcement official assigned to draft the legislation.

Some of the sharpest barbs came from visiting narcotics officers from California. While Colorado moved forward with pot industry oversight, the narcotics officers who berated Cook were right – at least about California, where trying to regulate America's largest marijuana economy has become a perennial political loser. A key factor has been intense law enforcement opposition itself.

In California, police have forcefully opposed any legislation seen as legitimizing a marijuana industry. Their opposition reflects a belief by many police officers that medical marijuana businesses are profiteering shams that were never authorized by California voters.

Training seminars offered for police by the California Narcotic Officers' Association suggest there is no such thing as medical marijuana and that state voters were hoodwinked into approving its use so people could legally get stoned.

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