

# Opinion: Calif. pot law would be bad for SLT

By Brian Uhler

During the last weekend of July, a group of women visited South Lake Tahoe for a bachelorette party. During the visit, the women willfully ingested marijuana brownies they obtained through a ride share company.

Within a few hours, 10 of the women were taken to the emergency room in South Lake Tahoe. Eight of the 10 were later admitted to the hospital for treatment.



Brian Uhler

While many would have you believe marijuana is a harmless drug, those of us in the public safety arena have seen increases in medical emergencies from marijuana ingestion. It is noteworthy that our system of emergency medical transport was completely tapped in order to handle this event. Thankfully, no other medical emergencies occurred simultaneously, otherwise someone might not have received timely emergency help.

Marijuana Legalization Proposition 64, which would legalize recreational marijuana if passed, is going to California voters in November. This initiative is bad for California and bad for South Lake Tahoe. After a similar, short-sighted 2014 initiative passed in Colorado, marijuana related traffic

deaths jumped 32 percent from 2013 to 2014.

Some in law enforcement find details in Proposition 64 very disturbing:

- False proponent claim: Provides “law enforcement the resources it needs to redouble its focus on serious crime”;
- False proponent claim: Provides “the strictest child protections and billions in new revenue for important programs such as public safety”;
- No MJ tax money for police: None of the tax money from marijuana is for any “boots-on-the-ground” law enforcement. In fact, the proposition specifically forbids marijuana related tax money from going to the California General Fund. The Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development is the biggest winner for future marijuana tax funds (increasing to \$50 million/year and continuing forever). California Highway Patrol, by contrast gets just \$3 million/year ending after five years for the non-enforcement function to “establish and adopt protocols to determine whether a driver is operating a vehicle while impaired, including impairment by the use of marijuana.”
- Kids exposed to MJ business: Proponents claim the proposition somehow provides child protections, yet Proposition 64 allows marijuana businesses to operate just 600 feet from schools. Further, marijuana businesses will be able to advertise to anyone, including kids, as long as the advertising “shall only be displayed where at least 71.6 percent of the audience is reasonably expected to be 21 years of age or older.” What about the 28.4 percent of a given audience which are kids? How are they being protected?

Proposition 64 is opposed by a broad coalition of healthcare, law enforcement, education, business, and community organizations and leaders across California. To learn more,

go online.

### **Stealing from cars**

We have seen an increase in the number of burglaries from cars (now a misdemeanor by virtue of Proposition 47 –The Safe Schools and Neighborhood Act). Please lock your cars as we have noticed many of the victim's vehicles were not locked.

*Brian Uhler is police chief of South Lake Tahoe.*