

October 16, 2024

Dear Ontario City Council,

Thank you for your love of our community and your willingness to listen to different viewpoints.

In the 'Pike County, Ohio Massacre' where 8 family members were murdered, we are told by authorities that marijuana did not play a central part with the 2016 execution-style murders, even though 3 of the 4 crime scenes were located where marijuana cultivation of over 200 plants was taking place. Should policymakers also summarily dismiss any influence mind-altering marijuana may have on other criminal incidents?

Having said this, tonight I am presenting documented local criminal incidents involving mind-altering marijuana that may reveal an association to psychosis and criminal behavior, and that demonstrate how public health and safety were endangered. I hope this report is both explosive and persuasive.

As I have mentioned in previous communications, studies show mind-altering marijuana use is associated with increased risk for harm to brain health. Mind-altering marijuana use beginning in teen years may affect brain development which may impair thinking, memory, and learning. Studies also show mind-altering marijuana is also linked to depression and social anxiety in adults and increases the chances of temporary psychosis and long-lasting mental disorders, including schizophrenia.

In addition, the Obama Drug Czar in 2013 found in a study that mind-altering marijuana is the drug most often linked to crime in the United States.

Suffice to say, when Mansfield City Council voted not to prohibit commercial cannabis in the Summer of 2024, Council members said they believed marijuana would be 'good for business and good for the city.' How little did they know.

Ironically, it was less than four years ago when a nineteen-year old Jaywuan Peavy was incarcerated on three charges each for "Inducing Panic" and "Inciting to Violence" for posting on social media: "PARK AVENUE RIOT JUNE 5TH we hit the streets to endure on destruction!!! We will be launching 3 attacks on Mansfield stores and will not be announcing once it is commenced this is only the beginning." Interestingly, Peavy was also charged with "Possession of marijuana." (1)

In December 2009, Kevin Dye used fire and explosives to damage the Mansfield City Hall building. The make-shift incendiary devices he ignited did \$800,000 in damages to the court chambers of Mansfield Municipal Court Judge Payton. At the time of the arson, the defendant Kevin Dye had six misdemeanor criminal cases pending against him before Judge Payton, including one misdemeanor for a marijuana offense. (2) Dye's checkered past involved at least one other marijuana offense in 2002, (3-4) and an August 2009 arson of a bar named Belcher's House of Rock. Consequently, Dye was sentenced to sixty years in federal prison for firebombing City Hall and setting fire to the local business.

In February 2022, Alexander Tittle was also charged with pointing and discharging firearms, falsification, obstructing official business, cultivating marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia over an argument with a neighbor at 91 Broadway over a shared garage and a snowblower. (5) 10 marijuana plants, lighting used for growing marijuana, and several items of drug paraphernalia were confiscated. The standoff involved officers of the Shelby Police Department, assisted by troopers of the Mansfield post of the State Highway Patrol and deputies of the Richland County Sheriff's Department, responded and established a perimeter around the residence. Ontario police were notified and requested to respond

with the Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT). Mansfield police were notified and requested to respond with the Allied Special Operations Response Team (ASORT).

On October 2010, one Morrow County Sheriff's Deputy responded to a an argument over a property dispute. When he arrived, he was told there was an illegal marijuana grow on the site. The grower, Shane Roush, fired at Deputy Brandon Moore, striking him four times and also fired on three other neighbors. Roush was shooting at these persons trying to protect more than 1,000 marijuana plants growing behind his Morrow County home. After the shootout, Moore had fifteen surgeries in two years and Roush was sentenced to 50 years in prison.

In November 2021 a car chase ensued at Sheridan and Bowman Street intersections and resulted in three juveniles being charged with receiving stolen property, possession of marijuana, improper use of firearm in vehicle, and failure to comply with order. (6) Four cars were damaged in the high-speed chase across Mansfield for five miles ending with a collision into a concrete wall. Two bags of mind-altering marijuana were discovered near the driver's seat.

In February 2016, three teenagers were arrested for felonious assault, endangering children, possession of marijuana, inducing panic, and criminal damaging. (7) The car chase began at the Second Street and Bentley intersection and involved 5 police cruisers. Children Services was involved since one of the cars had a four-year-old child. According to Police Chief Ken Coontz, the violence from a drug deal gone bad occurred "all over a bag of weed."

In October 2023, a mass shooting occurred involving 6 victims ranging from ages 14 to 19 and resulted in the deaths of 2 during a party at 810 Ferndale Road. One of the victims killed had used mind-altering marijuana before coming to party, and according to party-goers, mind-altering marijuana was present during the party. (8)

In December 2016, mass shooting occurred where 5 victims were admitted to the emergency room after being shot at Spruce Hill Inn near Snow Trails. The party involved more than one hundred people and the investigation remains unsolved. At the time of the incident, authorities seized mind-altering marijuana from the residence, and also observed it in one of the victim's cars. According to one of the shooting victims, people were smoking pot during the party before the shooting occurred.(9)

In August 2016, a mass poisoning occurred involving 24 persons at Ohio Dreams on 3495 Tugend Road. The concert-goers were transported to the emergency room after ingesting nerd candies laced with a high concentration THC. The candy was in packets labelled as "marijuana," and distributed by a licensed medical marijuana-user, Matthew Gross. Powdered marijuana possessed by Gross, known as Hashish was also seized at the concert. (10) Emergency personnel from as far as Shelby responded to the scene.

Sadly in May 2019, two young children, an unborn baby, and eventually the mother were killed in a car accident when coming home from Sunday church. They were struck by a car driven by Matthew McBride when he ran the stop sign at the intersection of Ganges Road and State Route 96. The family's husband also suffered a fractured skull and chipped vertebra. Authorities tested McBride four hours after the accident and found traces of marijuana and cocaine in his system. McBride was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Whether it is setting off explosives, calling for rioting, obstructing official business with car chases or standoffs, instigating mass shootings, or mass poisonings, mind-altering marijuana appears to have some association with erratic behavior costing communities valuable resources, and in some cases,

valuable lives. It is my hope Ontario learns from Mansfield's mistakes and joins other municipalities in prohibiting commercial cannabis to at least minimize the access and supply of this harmful drug. If the studies show mind-altering marijuana is associated with mental impairment and police reports show the presence of mind-altering marijuana in criminal incidents, will political bodies protect their people?

Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it in the future.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Mutti

Cc: Ontario Mayor

Ontario Safety Service Director