

As States Move To Legalize Marijuana Use, President Obama Compares Pot With Alcohol

By Administrator

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama says he doesn't think marijuana is more dangerous than alcohol. Obama doesn't argue for legalizing pot. But he says in an interview with "The New Yorker" that pot is less dangerous than alcohol, quote, "in terms of its impact on the individual consumer."

The president has acknowledged using pot when he was young and calls it "a bad idea." He says he's troubled that poor kids, many of them African American and Latinos, are far more likely to get locked up for smoking pot than middle-class kids.

But Obama urges a cautious approach, saying people who think legalizing pot will solve social problems are, quote, "probably overstating the case."

When it comes to harder drugs, he says, the harm to users and the social costs are profound.

Marijuana is illegal under federal law, but the Obama administration has said that as long as states regulate marijuana sales, it will not interfere. A key member of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has said legalization is "reckless and irresponsible."

Colorado opened marijuana stores on January 1.

The state of Washington is reviewing thousands of applications from those who want to produce and sell the drug.

November's election ballot is expected to carry the issue to voters in roughly half a dozen other states.

The conflict between federal and state law remains unaddressed.

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