Marijuana Initiative: Questions 9 on the Nevada Ballot wants to legalize Marijuana in the state of Nevada by making it a constitutional right for an adult 21 years of age to use or possess up to three ounces of marijuana, or its products, without cause for arrest.

- Three ounces of Marijuana produces approximately 250 cigarettes.

There are a number of issues that need to be addressed about this proposition most importantly that if this initiative does pass it is in direct violation of Federal Law.

With the passage of Medical Marijuana in the 2001 Legislative secession, and possessing up to an ounce of Marijuana having been made a misdemeanor and dealt with by a citation - no longer is it a felony.
- One ounce of marijuana produces approximately 80 cigarettes.

Marijuana Policy Project, a Washington, D.C. base organization, sent a lobbyist to start this initiative. The Nevadans for Responsible Law Enforcement(NRLE), that is funded by the Marijuana Policy Project, has written a proposition that is ambiguous, has undefinable standards, and is confusing the initiative with medical marijuana.

NRLE is misleading the public that this initiative is concerned with medical marijuana. Medical marijuana (which also was Question 9 in the last two legislative secessions, only further confusing the issues) passed the 2001 Legislative secession. Medical Marijuana is already legal.

There are a number of misconceptions regarding marijuana initiative. The NRLE touts that
- The Initiative will keep marijuana out of the hands of the youth.
- Marijuana is not a gateway drug
- The Initiative does not effect existing DUI laws.
- It will eliminate the black market.
- Free law enforcement to utilize their time more effectively.

Marijuana Initiative and children.

By legalizing marijuana, the MI will make it easier for kids to get marijuana either from their parents or by having someone buy it for them. Tobacco and cigarettes are both legal, and they are the most abused substance by kids.

Facts:
- In 2001, 49.5 percent of Nevada high school students admitted they have tried marijuana. If 49.2 percent of high school students have no trouble obtaining illegal marijuana, why would they have a problem obtaining legal marijuana?
- In 1999, 2 million Americans used marijuana for the first time, 3000 per day. Of the 2 million who used it for the first time 3/4 were between the ages of 13 through 18.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration(SAMHSA) study found smoking marijuana leads to changes in the brain similar to those caused by cocaine, heroin and alcohol. Heavy abuse impairs the ability of young people to retain information during their peak learning years when their brains are still developing.

Marijuana a gateway drug.

A study released on August 28, 2002 by the found that:
- Of the 62 percent of cocaine users, 9 percent of heroin users and 53.9 percent of prescription psychoactive drugs, all used marijuana before the age of 15.
- 0.6 percent cocaine users, 0.1 percent heroin users, and 5.1 percent prescription psychoactive drugs users did not use marijuana before the age of 15.
- Eighteen percent of individuals who used Marijuana before the
age of 15 became drug dependent as adults. And 2.1 percent of persons who did not use marijuana before the age of 15 became drug dependant.

The initiative nullifies existing DUI laws.

The Marijuana Initiative is written as *legislature shall provide or maintain penalties for: (a) Driving dangerously, or operating heavy machinery, while under the influence of marijuana.*

- The legislature cannot fix a constitutional amendment because the Constitution is the highest law of the land. Only the people can fix the Marijuana Initiative and only by constitutional amendment.

- There is no standard for “driving dangerously” it is unquantifiable. It leaves too much for interpretation and cannot be enforced.

The last section of the initiative states, *6. Any statute or regulation inconsistent with this section is null and void after January 1, 2005.*

This last sentence null and voids all existing DUI law regarding marijuana.

Traffic Safety Issue

- Twenty percent of all Driving Under the Influence crashes in Clark County were Driving Under the Influence of Marijuana.
- To date in Clark County where it is illegal to drive while under the influence of alcohol there has been 39 alcohol related crashes. Of which 45 fatalities ensued.

It can only be an estimate but there is room for a safe approximation that if this initiative passes there will be an equal amount of DUI’s that are Marijuana related.

- Adults will be no more responsible with Marijuana than with alcohol.

The Cost of Marijuana

The cost of Marijuana will be more then just the price of a marijuana cigarette.

- The cost of increase Auto-Insurance.
- The cost of Life and Health Insurance.
- The cost of increase home-insurance. (This initiative is for the responsible adult who will only use marijuana in the privacy of his/her home.)
- The cost of tax payer dollars for emergency medical, emergency rescue.
- The cost of human lives do to motor-vehicle crashes that injure and kill.

Under the Marijuana Initiative the State would grow, grant licence fees for wholesale and retail, and tax Marijuana. 

Again, this is in direct violation of Federal Law.

It will not eliminate the black market. It will be cost prohibitive for legal sellers because they will have to pay taxes, overhead cost for employees, utilities, and liability insurance.

The Initiative will only make the black market more attractive.

Law Enforcement

The NRLE contents that law enforcement spent 10,000 hours arresting people for small amounts of marijuana. That time could be used protecting Nevadans from violent criminals.

- Nevada has 5,000 law enforcement officers.
- take the number of hours by the number of officers, that comes to 2 hours per officer.
- Nevada is one of the top 9 states with the highest rate of new marijuana users.
- In terms of crime, 2001 data shows Nevada is the third most dangerous State in the Union with 59.6 percent of men and 71.5 percent of women when arrested tested positive for drugs. Twenty-eight percent of
men and 23 percent of women tested positive for marijuana.

**What Marijuana will do for you:**
Marijuana contains known toxins and cancer-causing chemicals which are stored in fat cells for as long as several months. Marijuana users experience the same health problems as tobacco smokers, such as bronchitis, emphysema and bronchial asthma. Some of the effects of marijuana use also include: an increased heart rate, dryness of the mouth, reddening if the eyes, impaired motor skills and concentration, and frequent hunger and an increased desire for sweets. Extended use increases risk to the lungs and reproductive system, as well as suppression of the immune system. Occasionally hallucinations, fantasies and paranoia are reported.

**What this law will do for you:**
In the privacy of ones home, individuals will be able to use Marijuana and/or its products. The Marijuana will impair ones judgement and motor skills. These same individuals who now have diminished capacity will make the decision when it is appropriate to:

- Drive on our roadways
- Work in our business
- Teach our Children
- Prepare and Serve our Food