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# TIME FOR SERIOUS DELIBERATION: MEDICAL MARIJUANA AND THE BENEFITS ON KENTUCKY'S FAILING PENSION SYSTEM

[Agriculture \(/full-blog/category/Agriculture\)](#)

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"Too many Kentuckians are suffering from debilitating Physical and Mental illnesses ...2 018 is the year when Kentucky finally steps up on medical marijuana. We have to get this done to help Kentuckians who are hurting," Allison Grimes stated in a WKYT article.[i] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn1) However, members of the Republican party think that Allison Grimes is out of line for her comments as Secretary of the State. [ii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn2) Beyond the ongoing moral debate surrounding medical marijuana, Kentucky now faces a major financial crisis that is affecting the state's pension system. "The decision to withhold the report comes just days after the Associate Press reported that the state's other main pension board—the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement system—released a report on the bill by its consultants that concluded the bill would cost tax payers an extra \$4.4 billion over the next 20 years." [iii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn3) With this framework in mind, it is time for Kentucky representatives to put aside their party preference and deliberate about the benefits legalizing medical marijuana will have on the economy.

A major social change is currently occurring in the United States on the understandings of the benefits of medical marijuana. Former Kentucky Basketball superstar Karl Anthony-Towns voiced his opinion to reporters about the potential of having medical marijuana cleared for NBA players, "I look at it from my experience with it. I've never smoked...But I deal with kids all the time at autistic schools, Reed Academy in New Jersey. My girlfriend has an autistic nephew, and you realize those properties of marijuana can do a lot of good for kids and for adults." [iv] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn4) According to Kentucky State Representative John Sims, "Kentucky is getting left behind on this issue. Already 29 states and the District of Columbia have enacted medical marijuana legislation to help their people...the research is done. The studies have been conducted. It works, and it is time we end our idling and start having conversations to bringing medical marijuana to the Commonwealth." [v] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn5)



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/politics/bs-md-special-session-medical-marijuana-20170731-story.html>

As Sims stated, many state economies are already benefiting from taxing medical marijuana. For instance, in Arizona, the state is applying a 6.6% tax on medical marijuana, which is estimated to generate approximately \$40 million, and will only be issued to eligible patients.[vi] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn6) While we can only speculate how much revenue Kentucky would gain by legalizing medical marijuana, it is a good starting point for Kentucky Legislatures to seriously deliberate about. With Kentucky on the brink of bankruptcy, Governor Bevin's administration admits that it is not the economy that is the issue, but that Kentucky's tax base is too narrow.[vii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn7) Thus, instead of gutting the Kentucky Teacher Retirement Plan, the State Pension Plan, or raising taxes, the legislatures need to consider rational benefits passing a bill legalizing medicinal marijuana would have not only on patients that seriously need it for their health conditions, but also to protect approximately 42,000 public school teachers and countless current and former state government workers' retirement.[viii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn8)

Kentucky's current lottery system helps fund millions of students in Kentucky. While many Kentuckians are adamantly opposed to gambling being permitted in Kentucky, the lottery system has provided substantial benefits to thousands of Kentucky residents. According to Governor Bevin in the Kentucky Lottery Corporation's Annual Report, 2016 was a-breaking year with \$253 million accrued and directly helping students receive scholarships to attend universities in the Bluegrass.[ix] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_edn9) So, although legalizing marijuana continues to be a hot topic in the Bluegrass, it is important to emphasize what Karl Anthony-Towns alluded to, this is not for individuals that wish to smoke marijuana recreationally, this is to assist patients that seriously need help.

In creating the bill, Kentucky Legislatures can focus on promulgating adjudicatory and rulemaking authority to a state agency, like the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, in order to oversee and provide their expertise to ensure that medicinal marijuana is not abused by doctors who proscribe it. By doing this, like with the lottery system, Kentucky will be able to adequately assist needy individuals that suffer from a chronic or severe illnesses, which medical marijuana has been scientifically proven to provide. Additionally, this will ensure Kentucky teachers and state workers can sleep safe knowing their pension plans will still be in place.

[i] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref1) *Grimes Pushing for Medical Marijuana in Kentucky*, WKYT (Nov. 16, 2017), <http://www.wkyt.com/content/news/Grimes--457947033.html>.

- [ii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref2) *Id.*
- [iii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref3) Tom Loftus, *Bevin Administration Refuses to Release Report on Pension Bill's Cost to Taxpayers*, Courier J. (Nov. 13, 2017), <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/2017/11/13/kentucky-pension-reform-report-withheld-reform-bills-impact-government-workers/857669001/>.
- [iv] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref4) *Karl-Anthony Towns Advocates for Benefits of Medical Marijuana Use*, NBA Media Rep. (Nov. 15, 2017), <http://www.nba.com/article/2017/11/15/karl-anthony-towns-minnesota-timberwolves-advocates-medical-marijuana#/>.
- [v] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref5) WKYT, *supra* note i.
- [vi] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref6) *Taxing Medical Marijuana in Arizona*, Ariz. Hemp Center, <http://mmjaz.com/Patients/arizona-medical-marijuana-tax.html> (last visited Nov. 17, 2017).
- [vii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref7) Adam Beam, *Kentucky Likely to Have Small Budget Deficit, Officials Say*, Associated Press (Apr. 10, 2017), <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/kentucky/articles/2017-04-10/kentucky-likely-to-have-small-budget-deficit-officials-say>.
- [viii] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref8) *Kentucky Education Facts*, Ky. Dep't. of Educ. (May 2, 2017), <https://education.ky.gov/comm/edfacts/Pages/default.aspx>.
- [ix] (applewebdata://B620CCCF-59B2-4B90-958D-58F9356FA25A#\_ednref9) *Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report*, Ky. Lottery Corp. (2016), [https://www.kylottery.com/export/kylmod/galleries/documents/KYLottery\\_annual\\_report/KLC\\_annual-report\\_2016.pdf](https://www.kylottery.com/export/kylmod/galleries/documents/KYLottery_annual_report/KLC_annual-report_2016.pdf) (citing Governor Bevin's letter on page two of the annual report addressing the benefits of the Kentucky Lottery system).


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 **Bella Dushner** 11 months ago · 1 Like

In my opinion its already 2018, and i think cannabis should be legalized in most of the country right now. Not only for giving them what they want but the cannabis help us in our daily routine. No wonder why many people allow marijuana to be legalized. And as i read here <https://www.worldwide-marijuana-seeds.com/blogs/marijuana-news/what-is-the-biggest-threat-to-the-marijuana-industry> that most of the country used marijuana in medical purpose, they also used CBD oil and they used it as an ingredients to the food. So why marijuana cant be legalized?

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