

Turning the Tide



SAM Smart Approaches to Marijuana
preventing another big tobacco
2019 Annual Report

Contents

- 1 Letter from the President & CEO and Chairman**
- 4 NY, NJ, and CT Chose Smart Marijuana Policies in 2019**
- 7 Educating the Public, Press, and Lawmakers
on Smart Marijuana Policy**
- 11 SAM's New Initiatives for 2019**
- 13 Boards**

Standing up for public health

In light of the nation's first widespread, marijuana-based public health crisis, SAM has stepped up to the plate to serve the interests of the public.

The overwhelming sea change with regard to marijuana policy in the United States is palpable.

With the FDA and CDC confirming the nation's widespread marijuana vaping crisis, the public and lawmakers alike are bringing discussions of legalization to a halt. Dozens of youth and adults are losing their lives to dangerous THC vapes, and thousands more are developing a lung illness.

This is exactly what we predicted when Big Tobacco, no stranger to public health crises, began consolidating the industry.

In spite of the pot vaping crisis, rising youth use of the drug, and more people losing their lives on the road, the marijuana industry

continues to sell these THC vapes, oils, youth-friendly gummies, and candies.

When the nation needed a voice of reason in the midst of marijuana industry spin and a national public health crisis, SAM and its partners were prepared to fill the void. We defeated legalization despite overwhelming odds in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and nearly a dozen other states. In New Jersey, we were outspent by the industry \$1.3 million to \$15,000 - and we won.

At the federal level, we expanded to the largest government affairs footprint in the history of our organization. We then went on to prevent the SAFE Banking Act and STATES Act from federally expanding the industry.

SAM set multiple records for media and press placements

Chicago Tribune

Commentary: The rush to profit from legal marijuana is leaving black neighborhoods in the dust. Chicago's Black Caucus and others should keep pushing.

By KEVIN SABET
CHICAGO TRIBUNE | OCT 29, 2019

Given the vaping crisis, N.J. should not legalize marijuana, an ex-presidential adviser says

By [Star-Ledger Guest Columnist](#)

By Kevin Sabet

Opinion: Protect vulnerable groups from exposure to Big Marijuana

Melvyn Levitsky and Kevin Sabet Published 10:37 p.m. ET Aug. 1, 2019

The Detroit News

Keep 'Big Marijuana' out of Connecticut

By KEVIN SABET
SPECIAL TO HARTFORD COURANT | APR 03, 2019 | 6:00 AM

OPINION

BIG MARIJUANA COPIES BIG TOBACCO'S PLAYBOOK. LET'S NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AGAIN | OPINION



Newsweek

The Gazette

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING JOURNALISM, EST. 1872

GUEST COLUMN: Protect Colorado's health, ban marijuana concentrates

Luke Niforatos Feb 24, 2019

Cuomo's marijuana mistake: Legalizing pot is bad for young people and public health

By KEVIN A. SABET
DEC 17, 2018 | 6:00 PM

DAILY@NEWS

In the media, we found unprecedented success in virtually every metric. We found particular success in educating the press on the source of the vaping crisis and driving the narrative toward holding the marijuana industry accountable. The discussion is now universally about THC when at first many thought it was nicotine-only.

At the beginning of the year, we saw Altria make a roughly \$2 billion investment in the marijuana industry, coupled with a \$14 billion investment in Juul. This consolidation would haunt our nation only 8 months later when the marijuana vaping crisis broke out. Now, Imperial Brands, the fifth-largest tobacco company on earth, has invested more than \$100 million in pot.

It is now fair to say that marijuana is officially a pet project of Big Tobacco. Given this overwhelming investment and lobbying interest, our continued success can only be credited to you, the public, our donors, and allies' continued support.

Each year, we are told the ship has sailed on marijuana. Each year, the science, the public, and communities across the nation rise up to prove this assertion to be folly.

We are prepared to fight at this pivotal point in our nation, particularly here at the turning of the tides on this issue. Our scientific advisors and partners are standing with us and in 2020 we will all rise to the highest heights.



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Kevin".

Kevin A. Sabet, PhD
President & CEO
SAM & SAM Action



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Jonathan T. Talcot".

Jon Talcot
Chairman
SAM

New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut lead Congress in putting public health first

2019 began with promises from Governors in New York and New Jersey to legalize marijuana quickly. Connecticut was considered an easy win for the pot industry.

4

Then SAM and it's allies stepped in.

In New York, we found strong partnerships with the state PTA and medical societies, along with law enforcement and other groups who helped stop marijuana commercialization in what was heralded by *The New York Times* as "well-coordinated opposition."

In New Jersey and Connecticut, lawmakers dropped plans to commercialize the drug after widespread coalitions led by social justice groups and minority caucuses said "No" to another predatory drug industry.



On the federal level, we expanded our government affairs team to unprecedented levels and found new champions in the House and Senate. As a result, we were able to block passage of bills such as the SAFE Banking Act, which would have allowed billions in investment into marijuana, and the STATES Act, which would have effectively legalized marijuana at the federal level.



SAM President and CEO, Dr. Kevin Sabet, being told by United States Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams, "He's right!" during a presentation at Oxford House convention in Washington, D.C., August 30th, 2019

In 2019, communities "opted out" of pot sales at unprecedented levels

California: **80%** of localities banned sales

Michigan: **80%** of localities banned sales

Colorado: Roughly **70%** of localities banned sales

Massachusetts: More than **50%** of localities banned sales

Illinois: A massive "Opt Out" movement formed and majority bans are likely



Above: SAM Scientific Advisory Board member, Dr. Christine Miller, testifying before a New Hampshire State Senate Committee in what was to become a whirlwind year of SAM advocacy for her.

Above: SAM ally and head of MAMA, Tiffany Davidson, shares her son's story of THC vaping addiction at SAM's Senate briefing on the marijuana vaping crisis.

Right: SAM President and CEO, Dr. Kevin Sabet, opening the Annual SAM Summit in Atlanta, GA.



Left: SAM Chief of Staff, Luke Niforatos, and allies in New York unveiling one of SAM's newest campaigns sharing facts on legalization using blown-up tobacco boxes.



Educating the Public, Press, and Lawmakers on Smart Marijuana Policy

SAM influenced policy at the state and national level, and was featured by the top press and media.

A few of SAM's many accomplishments this year:

- SAM expanded its federal government affairs footprint to the biggest it has ever been by bringing on multiple new team members
- Defeated legalization in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Minnesota, New Mexico, and more
- Helped push forward proactive congressional legislation allowing more research on marijuana
- Conducted billboard and other media campaigns across the country
- Implemented new tools to help affiliates and supporters be heard by their legislators

7

Right: SAM Vice President of Government Affairs, Garth Van Meter, presenting to U.S. Senate staffers along with Scientific Advisory Board member Dr. Christine Miller and MAMA founder Tiffany Davidson



Equipping You with Facts

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#PotVapingCrisis Talking Points and Facts

Talking Points:

- 86 percent of the cases of illness and at least 2 deaths have been connected to THC oils.
- At a time when we are investigating the causes of this rash of deaths and illnesses connected to marijuana oils and vapes, all marijuana legalization efforts and THC vaping oil sales should pause.
- This is not a black-market issue, it is the result of allowing Big Marijuana - an addiction-for-profit drug industry backed by Big Tobacco and companies like Juul - to mass produce these oils and vapes, along with candies, gummies, and other dangerously potent forms of the drug.
- Big Tobacco, E-Cigarette and Vaping Companies and the Marijuana industry share many of the same investors. The industries are connected by billions in investments.

Facts:

- 37 people have died from severe respiratory complications associated with vaping. At

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MARIJUANA, OPIOIDS, AND PAIN MANAGEMENT

The marijuana industry and its boosters have been actively advertising marijuana as a solution for the opioid epidemic; they claim that marijuana is an effective substitute for opioids in pain management and have even gone so far as to say marijuana can be used as a treatment for opioid use disorder. A deeper look at the scientific literature reveals that those who use marijuana are at much higher risk for developing opioid use disorders and that population studies claiming a correlation between state marijuana legalization and reduced opioid deaths have serious deficiencies. Better studies are more showing marijuana is a risk factor for the increased non-medical use of opioids.

"The opioid crisis appears to be worsening where marijuana has been legalized."
-JAMA International Medicine Journal, 2018*

There is evidence to suggest that a statistical association between cannabis use and the development of substance dependence and/or a substance use disorder may be stronger for substance use disorders including alcohol, tobacco and other illicit drugs.
-NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

THESE RESULTS ADD TO AN ALARMING BODY OF EVIDENCE IN A RECENT PUBLISHED REPORT FROM THE U.S. DEPT. OF HEALTH THAT LINKS THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC TO THE OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATH RATE IN COLORADO SINCE LEGALIZATION.
-MARIJUANA.COM

LATEST RESEARCH ON MARIJUANA & OPIOIDS

MARIJUANA HAS HAD NO IMPACT ON OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS OR REDUCED PRESCRIBING.

ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM 2012-2017

A large prospective study followed medical marijuana patients with a dual diagnosis of chronic pain and opioid dependence to test for potential impacts on opioid use or relapse prevention.

Results: They found that cannabis users were more likely to take additional doses of opioids than non-users. Non-users who discontinued pain medication indicated they stopped to take reported greater pain severity and more frequent pain episodes than those that did not use marijuana.

OPIOID OVERDOSE FATALITIES HAVE INCREASED IN COLORADO SINCE LEGALIZATION?

LESSONS LEARNED FROM STATE MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

MAY 2019

Reviewed by researchers from:
University of Colorado at Denver
Harvard Medical School
Boston Children's Hospital
University of Connecticut
Yale University
University of Kansas
and more

SAM Smart Approaches to Marijuana
www.samaboutsam.org

Our work, reviewed by our science advisory board, is cited regularly by major government agencies and experts.

The Money Trail: Where Big Pot Meets Big Politics

44% of Americans say they would be less likely to support a candidate who took money from the pot industry.

Has your member of Congress taken money from the marijuana industry?



Above: Dr. Kevin Sabet speaking at a press conference in Albany, NY, with state allies and legislators.

Below: SAM Vice President of Government Affairs, Garth Van Meter, testifies before the U.S. Senate Banking Committee.





2019 was the year the tide started turning. In 2020, we will build on the success of this growing movement.

Below: SAM Outreach Associate Will Jones



SAM's New Initiatives for 2019

2019 saw the sea change in support for marijuana as facts began to scream louder than industry marketing. SAM brought the movement forward in new and innovative ways, keeping in mind what is needed for success in 2020.

Thanks to support from the public, SAM was able to grow its government affairs team to the largest it has ever been, particularly to engage more on the federal level.

Given the nation's first ever widespread marijuana-based public health crisis, our efforts cannot be more important. This year, SAM's annual summit brought together federal, state, and local officials and some of the world's foremost scientists to lead the way.

SAM's success in executing its regional education and advocacy model in the states, particularly New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, has given rise to a broad array of new coalition partners, including the mighty New York State PTA. We will continue to build on these partnerships in 2020.

Our commitment to science has never been stronger. In 2019, we engaged our scientific advisory board more than ever before, enlisting them in testimony and other public facing projects at a time when the public needed them most.

In 2020, SAM is anxious to unveil a national legal initiative that will once and for all put the marijuana industry on notice.

Right: SAM Action Field Organizer Melissa Robbins and allies gather in New York for a press conference.





SAM Honorary Board

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General Barry McCaffrey (Ret.)

David Frum

SAM Board of Directors

Jon Talcott, Chair

Ian Colhoun

Mike Bloom

Ben Cort

David George

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SAM Science Advisory Board

Hoover Adger, MD, Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Adolescent Medicine, Johns Hopkins University

Judge Arthur Burnett, National Executive Director, National African American Drug Policy Coalition

Eden Evins, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

Sion Harris, PhD, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research, Children's Hospital Boston

Marilyn Huestis, PhD, Former Head of Toxicology, NIDA & Adjunct Professor, University of Maryland

Yifrah Kaminer, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry & Pediatrics, University of Connecticut

Kimber Richter, MD, PhD, Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, University of Kansas

Paula Riggs, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Colorado at Denver

Christine Miller, PhD—Retired Neuroscientist, MillerBio and Johns Hopkins University

Christian Thurstone, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Colorado

Krishna Upadhyia, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Kathryn Wells, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Colorado at Denver

Aaron Weiner, PhD, Director of Addiction Services, Linden Oaks Behavioral Healthcenter in Illinois

LIVE
6:35 am PT

EFFORTS TO COMBAT MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

LUKE NIFORATOS

Smart Approaches to Marijuana
Chief of Staff & Senior Policy Adviser

WASHINGTON
JOURNAL
C SPAN

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