



TO THE CITIZENS OF BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN: Your Board of Health respectfully submits to you the following:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Berrien County Board of Health feels strongly that the health and safety of our residents should be the primary focus of any and all legislation considered; and

WHEREAS, recreational marijuana places a significant strain on our health care system, and poses considerable danger to the health and safety of the users themselves, their families, and our communities; and

WHEREAS, marijuana use, particularly long-term, chronic use that begins at a young age, can lead to dependence and addiction as supported by *The National Institute on Drug Abuse* who reports that 9% of people who use marijuana will become dependent on it, with a risk of addiction increasing to roughly 17% for those who start using in their teens; and

WHEREAS, recent findings from Colorado's Retail Marijuana Public Health Advisory Committee have shown that regular use of marijuana by adolescents and young adults is associated with impaired learning, memory, math and reading, as well as failure to graduate high school; these adolescents and young adults are more likely to have psychotic symptoms as adults further burdening community mental health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, recent studies have found that individuals using cannabis are more likely to abuse opioids, adding further risk of increasing the public health epidemic of opioid abuse; and

WHEREAS, there is biological evidence that demonstrates that Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) can pass through the placenta to the fetus of a mother who uses marijuana during pregnancy or to a baby through breastfeeding; these effects are seen for months to years after birth and can cause decreased growth, impaired cognitive function and attention and an increase in depression symptoms; and

WHEREAS, increased consumption of marijuana would likely lead to higher public health and financial costs for society, far outweighing the potential revenue it could generate; this is observed through national revenue from alcohol and tobacco taxes and fees of \$39 billion per year, however, the legal, health, social and regulatory costs exceed \$449 billion per year; and

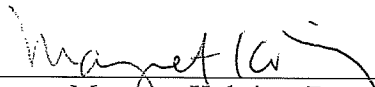
WHEREAS, the legalization of recreational marijuana would not eliminate the black market for the drug, as evidenced by experiences from states like Colorado, that continues to struggle with persistent black market activity including drug cartels that trade marijuana for heroin

and take marijuana back to Mexico; this increase in drug trade has also increased human trafficking and prostitution by 223% between 2014 and 2016; and

WHEREAS, there has been limited attention given to the development of regulations and oversight, penalties for sale to minors and/or misuse, standardization of dosing levels, prevention education and early intervention counseling for minors, or an infrastructure for addressing industry safety issues and needs; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Berrien County Board of Health and Berrien County Health Department strongly oppose the use of marijuana for recreational purposes and will continue to inform and educate residents and policymakers on the potential harms, risk factors, and devastating public health effects that expanding marijuana use could have in the State of Michigan.

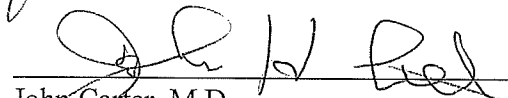
Resolution adopted
this 4th day of April, 2018
by the
BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH



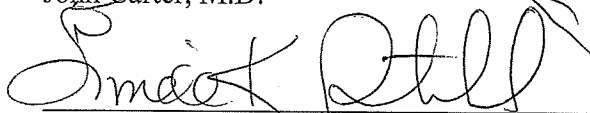
Margaret Kohring, Board Chair



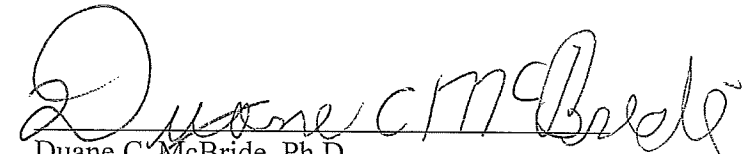
Joseph Wasserman, Vice Chair



John Carter, M.D.



Linda Strohl



Duane C. McBride, Ph.D.



Vanessa Brown



Raymond Matejczyk