

April 17, 2013

Anzalone Liszt Grove Research National Polling Summary

Friends,

Below you will find the Anzalone Liszt Grove Research National Polling Summary, which provides a pollster's take on data and trends that affect political campaigns.

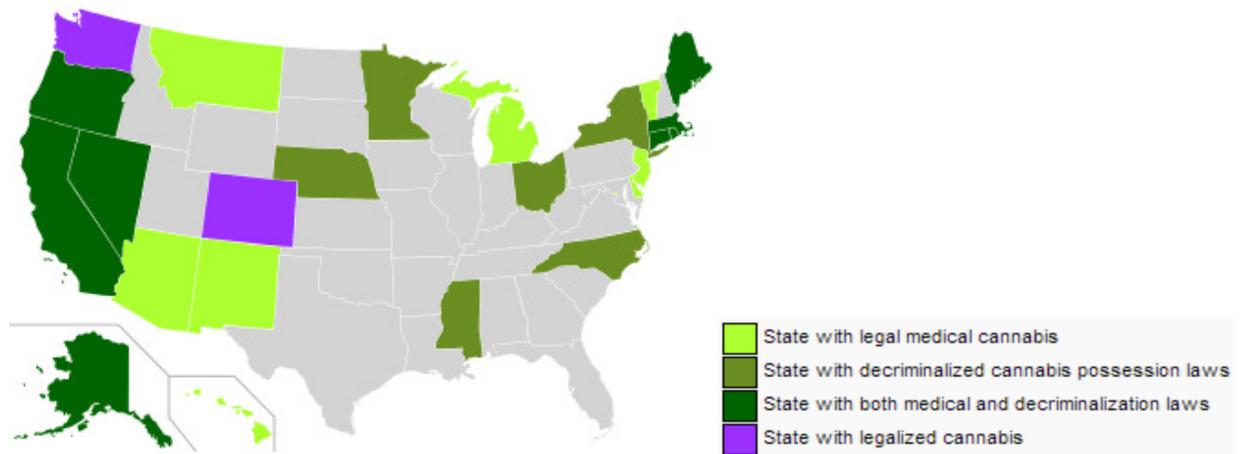
This week we focus on the growing support for the legalization of marijuana.

Following our analysis are additional news items and data we thought you'd enjoy.

John Anzalone, Jeff Liszt and Lisa Grove

Last November, voters in Washington and Colorado approved state referenda to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. While they are currently the only states to have done so, another 22 states and the District of Columbia allow the use of marijuana for medical reasons and/or have decriminalized possession of marijuana.

The federal government maintains its official stance that marijuana use is harmful and thus necessary to prosecute. But recent polling shows that such thinking may be outdated and out-of-step with how Americans view this issue.



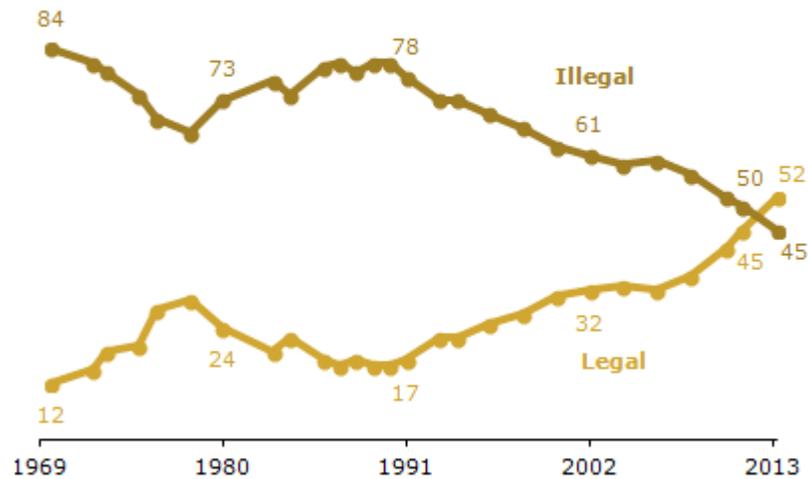
Source: Wikipedia

Support for legalization at an all-time high

Support for legalizing the use of marijuana is at its highest in over four decades of polling on the topic. The latest [poll](#) from Pew Research finds that 52% of Americans favor legalization, while 45% do not. Support for legalization has been steadily growing since 1991, when the General Social Survey found support stood at just 17%. Now the Pew poll, along with a [poll](#) from Quinnipiac in December 2012 (51% should be legal, 44% should not be), show for the first time that more than half of Americans favor legalizing marijuana.

Views of Legalizing Marijuana: 1969-2013

% saying marijuana should be ...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.
1973-2008 data from General Social Survey; 1969 and 1972 data from Gallup.

While Pew finds slight majorities of whites, African-Americans and Hispanics favor legalization, there are significant gender and age divisions. Quinnipiac finds a majority of men (59% -36%) favor legalizing marijuana, but only 44% of women do (52% oppose), a net [difference](#) of 31 points. Among the different [age](#) groups, support increases with each successive generation, with Millennials (65% favor) twice as favorable towards legalization as senior citizens (32% favor). A [majority](#) of Democrats and independents – 58% of each group – support legalization, while Republicans are against legalizing marijuana by a 2:1 margin (31% favor / 66% oppose).

Changing attitudes

Among those fighting to have Washington and Colorado's laws nullified are a group of Drug Enforcement Agency administrators, who have [labeled](#) marijuana a "gateway drug." But the growing support for legalization is coinciding with a shift in how Americans view marijuana itself. Only 38% of adults in the Pew [poll](#) agreed that "for most people the use of marijuana leads to the use of hard drugs," compared to 60% who agreed with the statement in a 1977 Gallup poll.

Furthermore, unlike other hot-button social issues, Americans are increasingly unlikely to see smoking marijuana as a [moral](#) issue. When asked whether they thought it was morally acceptable, morally unacceptable or not a moral issue to smoke marijuana, 50% of adults said it wasn't a moral issue, while 32 percent said it was morally wrong. This is a mirror image of where public sentiment stood in 2006, when 50% thought it was morally wrong and 35% said it wasn't a moral issue.

Who uses?

Along with increased support for legalization, and decreased stigma around use of the drug, roughly half of Americans (48%) now admit to having [tried](#) marijuana at least once. Despite the assumption that drug consumption was high in the 1960s and 70s, the percentage who currently admit to trying marijuana (48%) is 12 times what it was in [1969](#) (4%), and double the percentage from 1977 (24%). Among the 12% who admit using marijuana in the last year, 70% say that recreational use was at least part of the reason.

Over half of 18-29 year-olds report [trying](#) marijuana, with 27% saying it was within the past year – by far the highest percentage of all age groups. Men are more likely to have tried marijuana than women (54% to 42%), and equal numbers of whites and African-Americans have (50% of each group). And while partisans are divided on the issue of legalization, there isn't a large divide in terms of use: 43% of Republicans, 47% of Democrats and 53% of independents admit to trying marijuana.

Medical marijuana

Since California legalized the use of marijuana for medical purposes in 1996, support for medical marijuana has far outpaced support for recreational use. Seventy-seven percent (77%) now say that marijuana has [legitimate medical](#) uses, up from 58% in a 1997 ABC News [survey](#). Similarly, 83% in a 2012 CBS News [poll](#) think doctors should be allowed to prescribe small amounts of marijuana for patients suffering from serious illnesses, up from 69% in the 1997 ABC News survey. The CBS News poll found only modest partisan differences on the issue,

with 76% of Republicans, 84% of independents and 87% of Democrats supporting medical use. And while only 32% of seniors favored legalizing general marijuana use, 60% agreed that marijuana has legitimate medical uses.

A rare consensus

With fewer Americans believing marijuana is physically or morally harmful, and more agreeing that it can be medically useful, a rare consensus has developed in an increasingly polarizing and dysfunctional political environment. There is broad [agreement](#) across party lines that government efforts to enforce marijuana laws cost more than they are worth (Democrats: 71% agree / Independents: 78% agree / Republicans: 67% agree). There is similar agreement that in states that allow the use of marijuana, the federal government should not enforce federal laws against it (Democrats: 59% should not / Independents: 64% should not / Republicans: 57% should not). When a 2012 CBS News [poll](#) asked whether marijuana laws should be left up to the states or the federal government, majorities across party lines believed it should be a state issue.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE POLLING AND POLITICAL WORLD

Roll Call has the top five House [rematches](#) to watch for in 2014

Real Clear History has the top 10 [gun-toting](#) politicians in American history

Check out the winners and losers in first-quarter [fundraising](#)

Gallup finds that Americans overwhelmingly favor Congress returning some of their [pay](#) during sequestration

Researchers at UC Berkeley found that California's new online voter registration system is helping to bring [lower-income](#) people into the political process

Support still strong for universal [background](#) checks and an assault weapons ban

Seven in 10 Americans favor giving immigrants living illegally in the U.S. a [chance to stay](#)

Public Polling

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING

| Polling Firm | Date | Sample | Approve | Disapprove |
|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|------------|
| RCP Average | 4/5 - 4/15 | -- | 49 | 47 |
| ABC News/WaPo | 4/11 - 4/14 | RV | 47 | 49 |
| Rasmussen | 4/13 - 4/15 | 1500 LV | 52 | 47 |
| Gallup | 4/12 - 4/14 | 1500 A | 48 | 46 |
| NBC News/WSJ | 4/5 - 4/8 | 1000 A | 47 | 48 |
| CNN/ORC | 4/5 - 4/7 | 1012 A | 51 | 47 |

GENERIC CONGRESSIONAL VOTE

| Polling Firm | Date | Sample | Democrats | Republicans |
|-----------------|------------|---------|-----------|-------------|
| RCP Average | 3/9 - 4/14 | -- | 44 | 38 |
| Rasmussen | 4/8 - 4/14 | 3500 LV | 42 | 38 |
| Quinnipiac | 3/26 - 4/1 | 1711 RV | 43 | 35 |
| Democracy Corps | 3/9 - 3/12 | 840 LV | 46 | 42 |

PARTY SELF ID

| Polling Firm | Date | Dem | Rep | Ind/Other |
|--------------------|----------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Pollster.com Trend | April 16 | 35.4% | 26.4% | 32.3% |

Missed a past newsletter? They can be found on our website, [HERE!](#)