

Eye on World & Local

The Grass is *Greener* in New Jersey

By Jennifer Santangelo - *Lion's Eye Staff Writer* - jms1084@psu.edu

On January 18, 2010, New Jersey legislature approved a bill that would make the state the fourteenth in the nation to legalize medicinal use of marijuana. The measure passed 48-14 in the General Assembly and 25-13 in the Senate. Governor Jon Corzine is expected to sign the bill into law on Tuesday, January 26th. This may be Corzine's last act as Governor, since he lost his reelection bid to Chris Christie. For supporters of the New Jersey Compassionate Medical Marijuana Act, the bill's passage was just in time, as Governor-elect Christie has publically expressed reservations about the bill. For chronically ill patients though, this is a major victory.

Marijuana will not be available to just anyone. A patient must present a prescription signed by a doctor. The Department of Health and Senior Services will issue identification cards to patients that have a prescription for marijuana. There will be six locations where patients will be able to obtain their marijuana, and each will be carefully monitored by the state. New Jersey Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, who sponsored the legislation, stated that New Jersey's medical marijuana law will be the strictest one on the books. Doctors will only be allowed to prescribe marijuana for the most serious, chronic illnesses. Even so, use will be restricted to private property. Patients with a legal script for marijuana could still be arrested for public use. According to the Pocono Record Newspaper, State Representative Mark Cohen, a Democrat from Philadelphia, is sponsoring similar legislation. H.B.1393 would allow Pennsylvanians to obtain marijuana for medical use. He added that it would also provide much needed revenue for the state through fees and taxes.

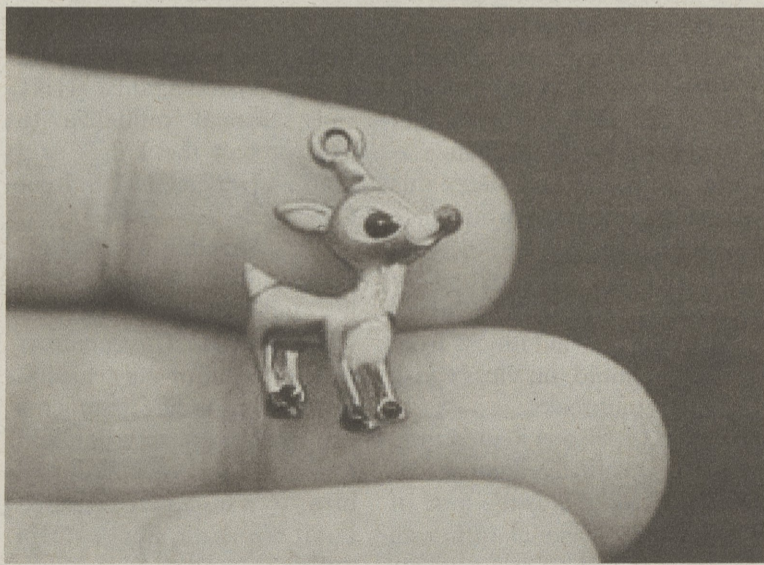
Proponents of the law however are worried that people, especially teens, will find ways to acquire the drug. America's most popular stoners Tommy Chong and Cheech Marin lauded the passage of the law on January 22, 2010 in an interview on Fox and Friends. "I want to legalize it for everyone" Cheech stated. When pressed by anchor Gretchen Carlson as to the detrimental effects of this, Chong replied that if "Eighteen year olds can vote for corrupt politicians" then why can't they smoke pot? Chong went on to state that at seventy-one years of age he was in the best shape of his life, and he owed it all to pot.



Michael Oliveri, who is a muscular dystrophy patient, celebrates with loved ones upon word of the bill's passing. Photo courtesy of MSNBC.com.

Raid the Jewelry Box - What's In Your Jewerly?

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Cadmium tainted jewelry
Photo courtesy of the Associated Press

Every girl's wish is to receive bracelets from their boyfriends, "best friends forever" charms from their sisters, and even a pair of classy earrings that glint in the light. Still feeling pretty? How about along with those charms and bracelets you get flu like symptoms, muscle aches, respiratory problems, and liver and kidney disease. Unfortunately, according to a study conducted by Ashland University of Ohio, this very well may be the case. Since the CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) along with the CDC (Center of Disease Control) banned the use of lead in children's toys as well as jewelry back in 2007, the occurrence of cadmium related sickness has heightened.

Cadmium, according to the CDC's most toxic chemicals list, ranks a number 7. Chemically, it is similar to zinc and mercury and in the past was used as a corrosion restraint, and in the making of batteries, but in recent years, says Yahoo news, cadmium has been used in jewelry because of its low cost and easy manipulation. Cadmium itself is not toxic in small amounts, but it has a tendency to accumulate in the body or in soil. Cadmium poisoning can be fatal in younger children, and being a known carcinogen, will most likely cause future problems to young teens and young adults who wear the jewelry. Symptoms of the disease include respiratory problems, pneumonitis (inflammation of lung tissue), liver and kidney disease, cancer, delay of brain development, muscle aches and chills, says Emaxhealth, a daily health online magazine.

AP, along with the CPSC, directed the tests ran at Ashland University by chemistry professor Jeff Weidenhamer at the start of the new year. Hundreds of products were examined, states MSNBC, and the highest percentages of cadmium were found in jewelry from Claire's as well as Walmart. Claire's is known to have 3,000 storefronts in North America that happened to be selling jewelry with 80-90 percent cadmium says The Eagle of Texas. Graciously, Walmart and Claire's have both agreed

to recall all of their jewelry for further testing. As it turns out, the jewelry was factory made in China where the use of cadmium rather than lead or other heavy metals was used. When asked about the cadmium, Wang Xin, a director general for the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine stated, "We just heard about this and we will investigate."

As the investigation unfolds, more and more support to rid stores of toxic jewelry is becoming common. Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, who is on the Commerce Committee, and also helped in ridding children's toys of lead said, "There is no excuse—toxic jewelry and toys need to be off our shores and out of our stores." According to The Eagle, Connecticut is also investigating their stores for cadmium jewelry and New York has actually banned the sale of jewelry with cadmium present. Parents are also being warned by the CPSC to throw out any cheap jewelry and to most certainly keep them away from any small children. Get rid of old jewelry. Do not buy from resale fronts or thrift stores says Manufacturing.net.

So, from now on, instead of three dollar toxic jewelry, try and purchase either more expensive or more natural elements. Gold, Silver or even hemp; it can all be pretty. The most important fact in the end is that beauty is not worth guaranteed illness or possibly death.