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## **“Just say no” to government-subsidized dope-smoking experiment, say Libertarians**

### ***Take a weed-whacker to government’s \$50,000 dopey study***

WASHINGTON, DC — Cheech and Chong, Uncle Sam wants you! That’s right: The federal government is looking for a few good potheads to smoke marijuana . . . and get paid to do it.

**But the Libertarian Party — America’s leading advocate for drug legalization — thinks it’s a dopey idea.**

“When it comes to using taxpayer money to subsidize dope smoking, Libertarians just say no,” said Steve Dasbach, the party’s chairman. “We don’t support the government paying people to smoke pot any more than we support the government throwing people in jail for doing so.”

Federal health officials recently announced that they were looking for 20 volunteers — all “habitual marijuana smokers” — for a government-funded scientific study into the effects of marijuana on motor skills. The study will be conducted at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, using high-grade marijuana grown at the federal government’s seven-acre “pot farm” in Oxford, Mississippi.

Like with all federal jobs, the benefits are great: Free, high-quality marijuana, \$50 per visit payments, immunity from criminal prosecution, and free cab rides to and from the laboratory. In all, the experiment will cost taxpayers more than \$50,000.

“Only the federal government could spend \$50,000 to throw a pot party,” said Dasbach. “Squandering tax money this way is the ultimate reefer madness.”

But all jokes aside, the experiment has a serious side, said Dasbach, because while the government is paying people to smoke marijuana, it’s also spending \$16 billion this year to throw hundreds of thousands of Americans in jail for doing the exact same thing.

“Yes, it’s ridiculous that the government is paying people to smoke dope. But it’s *tragic* that during the four days this experiment is conducted, 6,572 Americans will be arrested for marijuana offenses,” said Dasbach. According to federal figures, someone in America is arrested every 54 seconds for a marijuana offense — approximately 600,000 people a year.

Do Libertarians oppose marijuana studies? No, just *government-funded* ones, said Dasbach.

“Such research should be conducted by privately funded hospitals and scientists, not by bureaucrats addicted to wasting other people’s money,” said Dasbach. “That’s why pork projects — or, in this case, *smoked* pork projects — like the Bowman Gray School of Medicine study should be shut down. We need to take a weed-whacker to this silly government program.”

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