

## **Written Testimony of Bob Troyer, Former U.S. Attorney in Colorado**

I was the First Assistant U.S. Attorney and then the U.S. Attorney in Colorado during the entire first 7 years of Colorado's commercialization of marijuana (2012 through 2018). Based on that experience, I detail below the law enforcement/criminal consequences we experienced in Colorado during that period. Before I do that, please understand that it is as frustrating to law enforcement as it is to legislators and policymakers that several factors make precise data and causation proof extremely difficult to produce when looking at the crime impacts of commercialization.

### Black Market

According to the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area organization, the black market in Colorado is approximately 30% of the overall marijuana market. Sources for the black market are (1) international drug-trafficking organizations (from China, Mexico, eastern Europe, Australia) for which Colorado became a "theater of operations" with massive outdoor grows on public lands and networks of indoor grows operated in gutted/renovated residential housing (HIDTA estimates more than 50% of the black market is sourced from illegal grows); (2) licensed growers and retailers who divert excess product to the black market; and (3) individuals who sell on the black market the product they trim from their permitted number of homegrown plants.

### Violent Crime

Murders, aggravated assaults, robbery, and burglary increased in Colorado after commercialization. It's impossible to say what percentages of the increases were provably caused by commercialization, or state the precise numbers of marijuana-related murders, etc. (because law enforcement does not keep data on the motive/object of a shooting, murder, etc.). However, we saw many cases of assaults, shootings, robberies, and burglaries related to both legal and illegal marijuana operations. We also saw some surprising new crimes like armed hold-ups of US Postal mail carriers to steal their mailbox keys so the thieves could steal packages containing marijuana from those mailboxes.

## DUI

Marijuana-related traffic deaths in Colorado have increased 138% from 2013-2023, while non-marijuana-related traffic deaths have increased 29%.

## White Collar Crime

Investment fraud, tax fraud, securities fraud, bank fraud, public corruption, and money laundering related to marijuana blossomed in Colorado after commercialization, especially in the “wild west, gold rush, snake oil sales” early years. Environmental crimes also increased (use of banned pesticides and illegal discharges from both licensed and unlicensed operations).

## Property crime, juvenile crime, probation/parole violations

Theft from parked cars and the like increased in urban areas after commercialization. Juvenile marijuana use increased (all of which is illegal even after commercialization). Probation and parole violations for marijuana use increased, especially among juveniles.

## Degraded Law Enforcement Relationships, Resources, and Trust

Law enforcement resources were strained by the increases described above, leading to less enforcement, bitterness, conflict, and greater tension/reduced community trust when it fell entirely to law enforcement to fix these problems with no help from woefully under-funded marijuana regulators.



**Bob Troyer**  
Former United States Attorney  
District of Colorado

Bob Troyer was the United States Attorney in Colorado from 2016 to 2018. He was the First Assistant U.S. Attorney for six years before that, and in the early 2000s he was a line criminal prosecutor in that office's drug and violent-crime units. Bob spent the other 15 years of his legal career in private practice conducting internal investigations and litigating civil cases. While U.S. Attorney Bob received the PSN Outstanding Contribution Award from the U.S. Attorney General for helping

develop and deploy an innovative, forensic-intelligence violent crime prevention strategy in Colorado. Bob also served from 2016 to 2018 as a member of the National Crime Gun Intelligence Governing Board. He has conducted countless trainings for law enforcement, prosecutors, community leaders, and public officials on the use of forensic intelligence to prevent gun violence. Over the last four years, Bob has worked with numerous policing agencies in Colorado on policy issues, and he has conducted a number of independent investigations including one involving the Colorado Supreme Court and two into the history of Catholic clergy child sex abuse in Colorado. Bob currently serves on Colorado's PSN Board. Before he went to law school, Bob was a high-school English teacher and a commercial fisherman in Alaska