

Hello this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

I am amazed at how well known Humboldt County is to people who don't live here. I wish it were known for our majestic redwoods, pristine rivers, temperate climate, wilderness areas, national parks and the wonderful hospitality of the people who live here. Unfortunately, we are known primarily for our marijuana industry. Hollywood mentions the Humboldt County marijuana culture on a regular basis in their movies and TV shows. I don't know about you, but that just sickens me. We have so much to offer people who may want to come here on vacation or relocate here for business or retirement. This week the entire state is experiencing a major heat wave and we are hitting 70 degrees; Redding is over 110 today. They would probably laugh at me since I have my air conditioner on full bore as I'm driving around town. We should be clogged with tourists trying to escape the high temperatures. Our mild climate, natural beauty and exceptional salmon fishing should have every campground and motel booked for the entire summer. The drug problem is a major deterrent to attracting tourists to our area. This drug environment brings with it a huge increase of street people. These people are a major drain on our governmental resources. There is a lot of money changing hands in Humboldt County that isn't taxed. Some businesses are thriving with this and others are dying. It is a very unhealthy business climate. When marijuana is legalized, and it eventually will be, what will we have left when all this cash leaves us? Will we have a thriving timber and fishing industry? Will our port be developed for cruise and container ships? What economic future will we have in Humboldt County when marijuana

is legalized? There are some people who argue that we can grow, process and ship marijuana to the rest of the country. This is a nice idea on paper, but Phillip Morris and the rest of the tobacco giants will be involved, and they will grow marijuana in communities with the shipping and processing infrastructure already in place. It will be treated like any other commercialized agricultural product and be grown on huge farms near transportation hubs and population centers. We are too isolated for it to be economically feasible for it to be grown here. Our climate is ideal for growing many legal cash crops, the same reasons those crops are being grown elsewhere is why marijuana will be mass produced outside of Humboldt County once it is legalized. It is very unfortunate that we have evolved into this drug culture. This culture accelerated when we started allowing people with a 215 card to grow 99 plants legally. This opened the floodgates to people who wanted to profit from our lenient legal system. When this happened, I used my Community Comment time to predict that we would see a major increase in crime like murders and home invasion robberies. Unfortunately, I was right. The amount of crime reported in our local newspaper is alarming. In recent years we have started electing politicians who understand what is happening here. In future elections we need to continue replacing the pro drug officials with people who want Humboldt County to be a great place to live and work again. Being labeled as a community that is lenient with drugs isn't working out for the majority of our residents. Robberies are out of control and when the culprit is caught they don't spend a single day in jail. Keep all this in mind next time you vote.

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