



National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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## **Testimony Of Rick Steves In Support Of Personal Use Cannabis Cultivation in Washington State**

As a life-long resident of Washington State, a board member of NORML, and an original co-sponsor of I-502, I'd like to share my thoughts on why we should now allow the personal cultivation of marijuana in our state. As a member of the NORML board of directors, I speak for our entire organization.

Back in 2012, we were careful not to overreach on the issue of legalizing marijuana. That's because we didn't know for sure the will of the people. Also, as we were one of the first political entities to actually craft a way to turn this thriving black market into a carefully regulated, safer, and smarter industry, we didn't know for certain how our population would respond to the changes I-502 would bring.

The ending of a wrong-minded prohibition happens incrementally. Home-brewing of beer was not immediately on the docket as states made alcohol legal again with the repeal of Prohibition back in the 1930s. It eventually became clear that "home brewing" was a logical extension of the progress made on that issue and today we have the right to home brew as part of the rights afforded to adults that allow them to engage in responsible drinking. In the same way, we believe that home cultivation of marijuana is a smart step for our state to take at this time.

While Washington was conservative in its initial, ground-breaking law and did not include personal cultivation, each of the states that have legalized recreational marijuana after us (Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Oregon, Nevada) permit adults to cultivate limited quantities of cannabis in their homes. There are many practical, compassionate, and compelling reasons for this that I won't go into in this letter.

Polling makes it clear that residents of Washington State are thankful that we are no longer locking up cannabis consumers and that we have turned a once dangerous black-market industry into a highly regulated and highly taxed industry. Polling also indicates that our populace is now comfortable with allowing personal cultivation of marijuana, with reasonable parameters as set by the state legislature, to be legal as well. Please amend the laws in Washington State to allow for personal cultivation of cannabis.

Sincerely,

Rick Steves,  
Citizen of Washington State  
Board member of NORML