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## HEALTH (/HEALTH)

# Smoke and Mirrors

Rhyan Zuercher (/stories-by-author/rhyan-zuercher) | November 17, 2014 10:00 am

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As the medical marijuana pilot program gets underway in Illinois, some fear the corruption and cronyism the state is known for will dominate who will be granted the first licenses. We explore the application process and how it will be overseen by state officials. Joining us are Bradley Vallerius, attorney at Vallerius Legal and Professional Services who has assisted Illinois communities and program applicants throughout the medical marijuana pilot program process, and Kari Lydersen, investigative reporter and freelance writer for Better Government Association who recently released a "Rescuing Illinois ([http://www.bettergov.org/biz\\_lights\\_up\\_for\\_illinois\\_medical\\_marijuana/](http://www.bettergov.org/biz_lights_up_for_illinois_medical_marijuana/))" report for BGA detailing the secrecy associated with the medical marijuana licensing process.

**View a chart of possible revenue from legalized marijuana.**

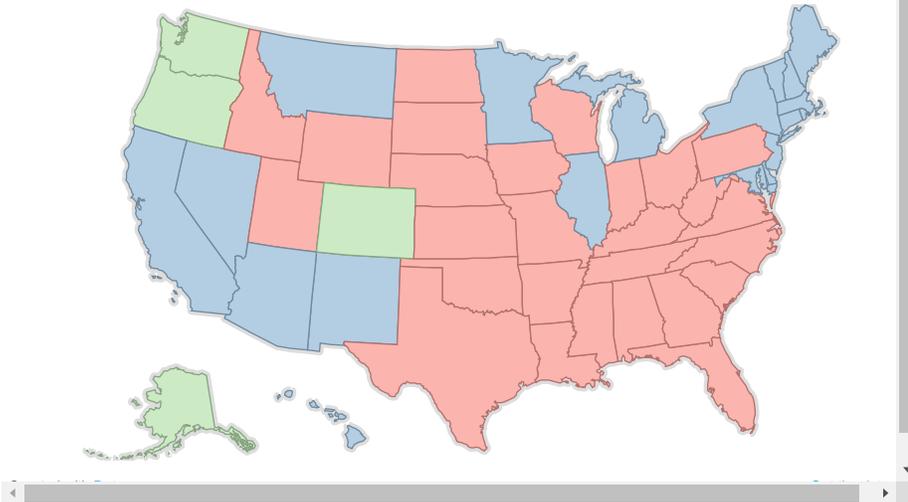
	CA	FL	IL	MI	NY	OH	TX
Population age 25+	24.78M	13.5M	8.56M	6.62M	13.31M	7.8M	16.4M
% of population 25+ who have used marijuana in the past month:	6.74%	4.73%	4.79%	6.61%	5.98%	5.39%	3.30%
# of marijuana users:	1.67M	638,727	409,971	437,649	795,924	418,842	540,883
State's portion of the marijuana market:	15.84%	6.06%	3.89%	4.15%	7.55%	3.97%	5.13%
Marijuana market size:	\$2.2B	\$848.33M	\$544.5M	\$581.27M	\$1B	\$556.3M	\$718.4M
Tax rate (state and local sales taxes combined) plus excise tax of 15%:	23.41%	21.62%	23.16%	21%	23.47%	22.11%	23.15%
Potential revenue from sales and excise taxes:	\$519.3M	\$183.4M	\$126.1M	\$122.1M	\$248.1M	\$123M	\$166.3M
Illicit drug use %:	8.68% to 9.35%	7.39% to 8.67%	6.71% to 7.38%	8.68% to 9.35%	8.68% to 9.35%	7.39% to 8.67%	4.08% to 6.70%
Current marijuana legislation:	Legal (medical)	Illegal	Legal (medical)	Legal (medical)	Legal (medical)	Illegal	Illegal

--Graphic by Travis Cornejo. Source: NerdWallet

**View a map of the legalization of marijuana in the United States.**

**Legalization of Marijuana in the US**

■ No laws legalizing marijuana. 
 ■ Medical marijuana and recreational use of marijuana is legal. 
 ■ Medical marijuana is legal.



\*Recreational use of marijuana in Alaska, Oregon and Washington, D.C. will become effective in 2015.

--Map by Kristen Thometz

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