

## Letter to constituents

As another session of Parliament has resumed, I was very happy to be asked to serve as the Shadow Minister for Democratic Institutions for the Official Opposition. I appreciate the hard work my colleague Member of Parliament Blake Richards has done in this portfolio previously and I look forward to doing my part to defend democracy in Canada and keep the Liberal government accountable.

This mailing is largely focused on the legalization of marijuana, which happened on October 17th. During the past year, I have been studying this issue and have spoken directly to Bill C-45 in the House of Commons. As mother, and a Member of Parliament, I have strong concerns about the negative impact this legislation could have on the health of our children.

The Liberal government say their intention, in passing C-45, was to protect youth, regulate the industry, and eliminate the black market however they haven't achieved any of those objectives.

Doctors and other medical professionals continue to warn us that keeping marijuana products out of the hands of youth is especially important as the brain continues to develop until the age of 25. Marijuana use before that age may permanently affect mental processes, memory and IQ, and will actually increase an individual's risk of developing severe mental disorders. The Liberals have ignored those warnings and have actually legalized possession for minors aged 12 to 17.

Provinces and various associations (including landlords) are extremely concerned that the legislation legalized home grown marijuana. Canadians will be permitted to grow yields of up to 600 grams in their homes, easily leading to trafficking and actually contributing to the black market, as well as making enforcement extremely difficult for police.

Numerous organizations and associations—such as the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police—asked the Liberals to allow for more time before C-45 took effect. Over 68,000 police officers in Canada need specific training in the wake of this monumental legislative change, and they have simply not been given enough time.

Despite provinces, municipalities, police forces, indigenous communities, and the Canadian public having made it clear that they are not ready to implement this legislation and that more time should have been allowed for adequate consultation, the Liberal government chose to force C-45 through all levels of Government. This has left many Canadians with unanswered questions about how the legalization will affect them. I have compiled some information for constituents of Calgary Midnapore which I hope will help in the coming months.

Sincerely,  
*Stephanie Kusie, M.P.*  
Shadow Minister for Democratic Institutions



### DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE MONTHLY UPDATES FROM STEPHANIE?

In order to ensure you receive information about upcoming town halls, roundtables and open houses, please consider signing up for Stephanie's monthly electronic newsletter.

For how to do this, as well as to follow your Member of Parliament in the House of Commons, visit [www.stephaniekusiemp.com](http://www.stephaniekusiemp.com).

RIGHT: As former Deputy Shadow Minister for Health, Stephanie spoke several times in the House of Commons about her concerns regarding C-45.

## Federal Marijuana Laws

The Cannabis Act (C-45) came into effect on October 17, 2018. It creates a legal framework for controlling the production, distribution, sale and possession of cannabis across Canada.

The Federal government's responsibilities are to set requirements for producers who grow and manufacture cannabis, implement industry-wide rules and standards, set criminal penalties, and provide a framework to be used by provinces to implement the legalization of marijuana.

C-45 allows individuals to possess up to 30 grams of legal cannabis; buy dried or fresh cannabis and cannabis oil from a provincially-licensed retailer; grow up to four cannabis plants per residence for personal use; and make cannabis products, such as food and drinks, at home.

The federal government has also made it a criminal offence to give or sell cannabis to youth or use a youth to commit a cannabis-related offence. However, youth (12-17) are allowed to possess marijuana under C-45. Some provinces, including Alberta, have implemented laws to address this issue.

## How can we help?

The MP office is not an intake point for federal issues, but can certainly make inquiries if a constituent has encountered difficulties dealing with the federal government. We generally only get involved *after* avenues within the respective department have been exhausted. Both my Ottawa and Calgary offices are glad to do what they can to help with any problems concerning the federal government, any of its departments, or with its policies. People often contact us regarding Citizenship and Immigration, Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Canada Revenue Agency matters and agricultural issues. We can also help you request congratulatory messages for family or friends (or yourself) for special birthdays and wedding anniversaries. Please use any of the contact methods found below, or go to my website to send us an e-mail message. **Please remember to include your full address in any correspondence so we can contact you.**

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## Health impacts of Marijuana use

### IMPAIRMENT

Marijuana has the potential to impair the ability of individuals to remember, concentrate, pay attention, and coordination. These marijuana symptoms drastically slow reaction times, making driving a vehicle or operating equipment extremely dangerous. Cannabis impairment is different for every individual and can be influenced by how you take cannabis such as smoking or ingesting it. There is also no standard wait time to drive after using cannabis. If you are using cannabis, you must not drive and find an alternative.

### MENTAL HEALTH

Using cannabis regularly and continuously over time makes you more likely to experience anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and psychosis. Cannabis use can result in psychotic episodes where individuals can experience paranoia delusions and hallucinations. Individuals can also be physically dependent or addicted to cannabis. It is estimated that 1 out of 11 (or 9%) of those who use cannabis in their lifetime will become addicted.

### PHYSICAL HEALTH

Smoking cannabis can hurt the lungs and make it harder to breathe. Cannabis smoke contains many of the same harmful substances as tobacco smoke. Like smoking cigarettes, smoking cannabis can damage your lungs and cause conditions such as bronchitis, lung infections chronic (long-term) cough, and increased mucus buildup in the chest.

### MARIJUANA AND YOUTH

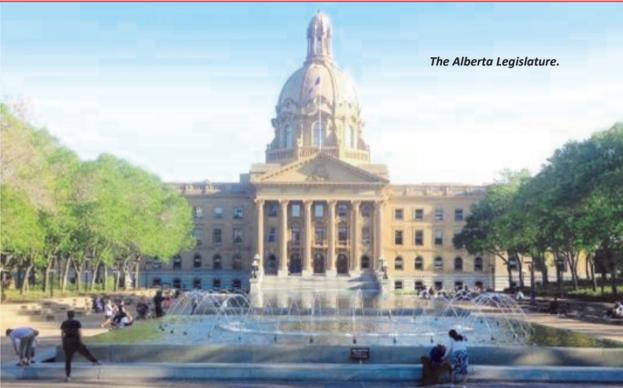
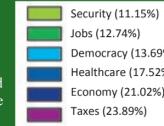
Youth are especially vulnerable to the effects of cannabis, as research shows the brain is not fully developed until around age 25. This is because THC, the substance which gives the "high" in cannabis, affects the same machinery in the brain that directs brain development. Because of this, the mental health risks associated with cannabis, such as addiction, depression, schizophrenia and psychosis, are much more frequent and severe in those who use cannabis under 25. Medical research has also shown that in adolescence these health complications can be irreversible.

### MARIJUANA AND PREGNANCY

The chemicals in cannabis are passed through the mother's blood to her fetus during pregnancy as well as into the breast milk following birth. This can lead to health problems for the child such as lower birth weight, poor memory function, a lack of reasoning and problem-solving skills, hyperactive behavior, ability to pay attention, and increased risk for future substance abuse.

## Issues of importance to Calgary Midnapore

In her previous household mailing, Stephanie asked constituents to identify which federal areas of concern were most important to them and she appreciates all the feedback she has received as it helps her identify key areas on which to focus. Responses are still arriving, however the summary at right indicates the general overview of priorities. While taxes are clearly the most important, constituents have confirmed that they have a broad range of concerns federally.



The Alberta Legislature.

## Provincial laws—what is Alberta doing?

### MINIMUM AGE

The minimum age for purchase, consumption and possession of marijuana in Alberta is 18 years of age.

### RETAIL BUSINESSES

Adults above the age of 18 will be able to purchase marijuana from retail outlets. Any store that sells cannabis will require a provincial retail marijuana licence to legally operate. Retail locations are not permitted to sell marijuana in the same place as alcohol, tobacco or pharmaceuticals, and cannot be combined with another uses, such as a convenience store. Marijuana consumption in the store is not permitted. Therefore smoking lounges, cafes or specialized bars for marijuana will not be allowed. There will also be location restrictions with buffers that keep retail locations for marijuana away from schools, daycares and community centres.

### PERSONAL USE

The government of Alberta will permit adults to grow up to four plants indoors at home for personal use, using seeds purchased from an authorized retailer. However, all marijuana grown for personal use must be grown indoors. Also, rental properties, landlord/tenant agreements or condo bylaws will have the opportunity to restrict whether marijuana can be grown or consumed in those spaces. Public consumption will be restricted to spaces only where tobacco smoking is also allowed in order to limit the public's exposure to marijuana and second-hand smoke.

### IMPAIRMENT

The province will be introducing new tools to expand the ability of police to address drug-impaired driving. The province will be working with the federal government to effectively train and properly equip law enforcement in the wake of the legalization of marijuana. Consuming marijuana in vehicles will be prohibited and there will be a zero tolerance for consuming marijuana and driving in youth and graduated drivers.

## Municipal By-Laws—What is Calgary doing?

### BUSINESS LICENSES

A City of Calgary business license is required for marijuana facilities. A Marijuana Facility license must not be issued to a residential dwelling unit or any premises located in a residential land use.

All Marijuana Facility municipal business licenses include a police information check.

### MEDICALLY PRESCRIBED MARIJUANA

Use of medically prescribed marijuana is prohibited in the same areas where smoking is prohibited. It may be smoked or vaped in many of the same areas that are allowed under the Smoking and Vaping Bylaw.

### PUBLIC CONSUMPTION OF MARIJUANA

As part of the Marijuana Consumption Bylaw, public use rules for marijuana will be like those for public consumption of alcohol. It will be illegal to consume marijuana in any form (smoking, vaping, or edibles) in any public places, except for designated marijuana consumption areas. Festivals and events in Calgary may apply to provide a designated marijuana consumption area, similar to a beer garden.

### USING MARIJUANA ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Under Provincial and Municipal laws, a person will be allowed to smoke, vape or otherwise consume marijuana on their private property. The City of Calgary will not regulate use on private property. The City will view marijuana smoke in the same way as cigarette or fire-pit smoke. It may be annoying to some, but it is legal.

## Stephanie in the riding

Stephanie has been busy during her weeks in the constituency. From participating in Stampede (*right*), to meeting with stakeholders (*bottom right*), and hearing from constituents (*bottom left*), she has used the opportunity to connect with as many residents of Calgary Midnapore as possible. In addition, she has been reviewing the responses received after her last residential mailings, and will be bringing all that feedback with her as she returns to Ottawa for the next Parliamentary session. She is planning to have a town hall meeting in October—see the inside cover of this publication for more information.



**STEPHANIE KUSIE, MP**  
CALGARY MIDNAPORE