

October 19, 2020

To: Steering and Rules Committee

From: Paul Mozina

Re: CC File [200623](#) -- Communication from various community groups relating to their demands for legislative and other changes they are seeking in the name of social justice.

The Root of Injustice

Basic Human Rights and Social Justice demand that city, county, state and federal governments stop criminalizing what they arbitrarily designate as “controlled substances”. Every human being has an inherent, inalienable right to their body and complete freedom to consume anything they want so long as in doing so they do not infringe on the life, liberty or property of another human being.

No human being has the right to dictate to another person what they can or cannot put in their body, and therefore this is not a right that can be delegated to any association of individuals calling themselves “government”.

From time immemorial, people have sought substances capable of altering their mind and body – it is a quintessential manifestation of human curiosity and ingenuity. The motivations for consuming these substances are purely private, but that does not absolve the person from the unequivocal responsibility for their actions while under the influence.

These undeniable facts have not stopped those who claim to be our masters by virtue of their political titles from usurping our fundamental freedoms under the color law and the monopoly use of coercive violence.

The war on drugs has failed miserably for a myriad of reasons.

- People simply refuse to be told what they can or cannot put in their bodies despite any threats from the state – they always will. The immutable laws of demand and supply do not bend to the whims of legislators.
- Justice Louis Brandeis said: “If we desire respect for the law, we must first make the law respectable.” When alcohol and tobacco, which kill way more people and cause way more harm than all of the “controlled substance” combined, are readily available at every gas station, pharmacy, convenience store, grocery store, liquor store, bar and tavern – while being protected by highly effective lobbies – any sane person can see that the controlled substances law is an ass.
- The so-called war on drugs creates crime. It increases violence, death, incarceration, poverty and overdoses because it perpetuates an illegal market just like alcohol prohibition did. The collateral damage in turn fuels the demand.
- Enforcement efforts have targeted black and brown people for three generations resulting in concentrated mass incarceration, broken families, homelessness, disrupted educations, restricted job opportunities and trauma – again, fueling demand.

- Attempts to suppress natural, plant-based intoxicants via criminal sanction have resulted in the creation of new, highly potent and profitable, synthetic replacements that flood the market and are impossible to suppress.

What can the Common Council do?

- Give a new mandate to the Milwaukee City-County Heroin, Opioid and Cocaine Task Force requiring them to hold hearings and study the impact that the war on drugs is having on our community and report back recommendations for reducing the harm by December 31, 2021.
- Mandate that the MPD increase cooperation and data sharing with the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission to help them report on the specific casual factors underlying the homicides and non-fatal shootings that occur daily in our community, including specifically, an in-depth analysis of those that are drug related. Support and encourage the MHRC and ask them to present their findings bi-annually to the Public Safety and Health Committee.
- Require the Office of Violence Prevention to be an active and engaged participant in the MPD's "Shoot Reviews" and report their findings on this engagement to the Public Safety and Health Committee on a Quarterly basis.
- The Common Council should stop accepting all grants from the state and federal government related to prosecuting the war on drugs such as the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area and Metropolitan Drug Task Force grants.
- Ask the Fire and Police Commission to create new Standard Operating Procedures for the MPD to control and report on their use of no-knock search warrants, confidential informants and coercive interrogations.
- Request legislative changes at the state and federal levels that will end the war on drugs including H.R.3884 – Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act of 2019.
- Request legislative changes at the state and federal levels that will reduce or eliminate the thousands of collateral consequences that felons who have completed their sentences are subjected to (see the National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction at https://niccc.csgjusticecenter.org/database/results/?jurisdiction=342&consequence_category=&narrow_category=&triggering_offense_category=&consequence_type=&duration_category=&page_number=1).

THANK YOU