

## **Pot Makes Daley Crazy**

### **Stroger may veto ticket law**

*By STEVE RHODES*

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As if Todd Stroger couldn't make himself any less popular, he's now making noises about vetoing an ordinance passed by the Cook County Board that would ticket pot possessors instead of putting them in jail.

Stroger told WGN-AM that he "didn't think it's such a great idea."

Under the plan, those caught with 10 grams or less would pay a \$200 fine and be done with it.

"I'm not really an advocate of trying to decriminalize the drug that people start before they move on to the higher stuff," Stroger said.

Like Scotch?

Meanwhile, Mayor Richard M. Daley appeared to be on acid while reacting to the idea.

"People say you cannot smoke . . . they said, 'Please don't smoke.' Now, everybody's saying, 'Let's all smoke marijuana'."

Dude! Chill.

"Pretty soon, the headline [will be], 'Let's bring cigarettes back. It makes people feel calmer, quieter, relaxing' . . . We said you cannot smoke cigarettes. Cigarette smoking is bad for you. Now all the sudden, marijuana smoking is good for you. Can we take Lucky Strikes, mix 'em together and say, 'Smoking is coming back in the United States?'"

Um, okay . . .

"Can somebody explain the Mayor's flip-flop on decriminalizing pot?" state Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chicago) tweeted. "His own statements make no sense."

That's in part because Daley could use a relaxant and also because he's directly contradicting himself.

"Nearly five years ago, Mayor Daley embraced a police sergeant's proposal to ticket people for small amounts of marijuana - from \$250 for 10 grams of pot to \$1,000 for 20 to 30 grams - but the plan never got off the ground," the *Sun-Times* reports.

Back then, Daley said:

"It's decriminalized now. They throw all the cases out. It doesn't mean anything. You just show up to court. Another case goes out. That's all it is. There's nothing there. They don't even show up - the offenders. It doesn't mean anything.

"Why do we arrest the individual, seize the marijuana, [go] to court and they're all thrown out? It costs you a lot of money for police officers to go to court . . . Sometimes a fine is worse than being thrown out of court."

Now he says:

"We're worried about health care for everyone and, all of the sudden, we think marijuana smoking is the best thing if someone drives down the expressway, someone's driving a cab, someone's driving a bus, someone's flying a plane. After a while, where do you go?"

*What?*

Meanwhile, 13 states have reduced penalties on marijuana possession, according to the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. In Illinois, possession of 2.5 grams or less will get you 30 days in jail and a \$1,500 fine.

*Steve Rhodes is the proprietor of The Beachwood Reporter, a Chicago-centric news and culture review.*

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