

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Vialet: I Have Seen What Marijuana Does To Young People

Politics / **Published On September 03, 2014 12:57 PM /**

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Venerable Virgin Islands educator and senatorial candidate, Kurt Vialet, has revealed he does not support the legalization of marijuana for recreational use in the Virgin Islands, stating that as an educator, he has seen the drug destroy otherwise intelligent students.

"I in no way agree with the legalization [of marijuana] at all," Vialet [said in an interview on 102.1 FM on Saturday](#). "I don't agree with it because I have seen the effect on our young population. We're losing a lot of our young males and females because of marijuana."

Vialet's strong opposition to the legalization of the drug stems from his experiences as an educator. He pointed out that he has seen students arrive at school in the mornings

"stoned" due to marijuana use and saw how the drug destroyed others, who at first, came with a great deal of potential.

"On the junior high school level, I had students coming school in 7th grade literally stoned in the morning," he said. "You could literally see the changes."

Vialet went on to share his observations during his time as a high school administrator.

"When I was at Complex, I saw students who came in 9th grade, such nice students [and] you just look at them and you're like, 'Oh, wow', and you see them three years after and you're like, 'What's really going on? What happened to that person?' But, they were just consistently using marijuana," he said.

To further solidify his opposition to the legalization of the widely used recreational drug, Vialet cited the psychological effects marijuana has on young minds.

"And the studies have come out that if you start smoking before sixteen, it literally kills brain cells," he said. "So, once you start smoking at an early age, it's going to have a profound effect on you."

Although Vialet said he was in support of the medicinal use of marijuana, his stringent stance on the drug still persisted as he would only support legislation that has been properly crafted.

"Medical marijuana yes, but the legislation will have to be very carefully crafted, because medical marijuana don't (sic) mean that you're going to get a prescription because you get headaches or your foot is hurting," he said.

Vialet continued: "If you look at places like Colorado and the other places where medical marijuana is legalized, they are very specific in terms of who is going to be able to get a prescription, and they are even specific to the point where they're telling you what strain you need to use. So, I am not in support of it if they're going to use it as a backdoor; I'm in support of it, if the legislation is written in a way it's supposed to [be written]."

When asked his opinion on the separate issue of decriminalizing marijuana, which currently carries various prison terms based on possession amounts, Vialet says he is in support of it.

"I'm also in support of decriminalization because I just think it's a waste of time to be spending thousands of dollars to lock somebody up for a small amount of marijuana and [the government] pays for everything for them," he concluded.

Kurt Vialet is a candidate seeking office in the 31st Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands.