

Letters to the Editor

Measure 5 fails to provide enough detail

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The Oct. 17 and 25th letters from Mary Rennich failed to provide a complete picture of costs and revenue specifically identified in the Measure 5 fiscal note.

While total costs and revenue of a program for use of marijuana for medical purposes, as spelled out in Measure 5, are not completely known, a thorough study shows that the Department of Health alone would realize a net cost of \$2.7 million unfunded expenditures during the first biennium. There will be additional significant costs and revenue to other entities, related to Measure 5, but we don't know what those amounts are as they are too difficult to estimate.

Measure 5 provides no time or funding for start-up costs that, in some states, took 18 months to implement. Measure 5 would require significant amendments by the Legislature to provide clarity, corrections, and adequate start-up funding.

In some states, laws for medical use of marijuana are limited regarding the number of growers/sellers, conditions marijuana can be used for, and the methods of use. Measure 5 broadly allows unlimited growers/sellers, includes over a dozen conditions, and allows any form of use. This significantly affects the costs associated with Measure 5.

In Rhode Island, while "no additional staffers were hired" to implement their laws, staff were removed from their regular duties; consequently, they were unable to meet many department mandates and they are now adding staff and shifting some duties to another state agency.

The fiscal costs and revenue are only one aspect of Measure 5 the voters will have to consider. Additional information on Measure 5 is available at <http://ndhealth.gov/>.