

M O T I O N

Although the nation banned tobacco ads on television almost 50 years ago, the upcoming statewide marijuana ballot initiative could allow TV commercials promoting pot to air alongside advertisements for cereal and cleaning products.

Proposition 64, which is on the November ballot, would allow people age 21 and older to possess and use up to an ounce of marijuana and would allow pot shops to sell cannabis for recreational use. The initiative also includes a provision that could someday allow cannabis sellers to advertise their products in print ads and on digital sites and radio and television stations, but would "prohibit the marketing and advertising of non-medical marijuana to persons younger than 21 years old or near schools or other places where children are present."

Although there are other impediments to pot ads hitting the airwaves in California, including the fact that cannabis is still recognized by the federal government as an illegal drug, the possibility that television commercials will some day arise featuring people smoking marijuana is cause for concern that this would roll back decades old anti-smoking advertising protections and would allow marijuana smoking ads in prime time, on programs with millions of children and teenage viewers.

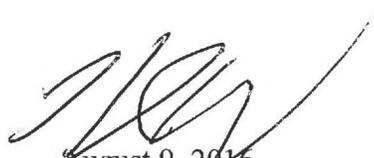
Health officials have also expressed concern that television ads for smoking marijuana would 're-normalize' smoking in general. Although a key provision of the initiative says: "Any advertising or marketing placed in broadcast, cable, radio, print and digital communications shall only be displayed where at least 71.6 percent of the audience is reasonably expected to be 21 years of age or older, as determined by reliable, up-to-date audience composition data," a study conducted by a concerned group found that the standard would still allow marijuana ads on shows whose audiences include many minors. The initiative's 71.6% adult audience threshold would mean that almost every show on television will have ads promoting smoking marijuana.

The City needs to prepare to address the issue of marijuana advertising if Proposition 64 is approved by California voters in November.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney be requested to report on options for prohibiting the advertisement of marijuana if recreational use is approved by the voters in November, including a discussion of what the City currently does to prohibit alcohol and cigarette advertising.

PRESENTED BY: 
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SECONDED BY: 


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