

LEGALIZING & REGULATING CANNABIS IN SASKATCHEWAN

*Cynthia Bojkovsky, Jason Childs,
George Hartner & Kathleen McNutt*

The Current Cannabis Context

- Cannabis is the most commonly used illegal drug in Canada
- Young Canadians are the most common users
 - Heaviest cannabis use group is young people ages 18-24
 - Second highest use group is youth from 12 to 17
- Countless policing hours spent to fight out of control cannabis markets
- Opinion polls generally show Saskatchewan people support the legalization of cannabis but are worried about how governments will regulate the sector

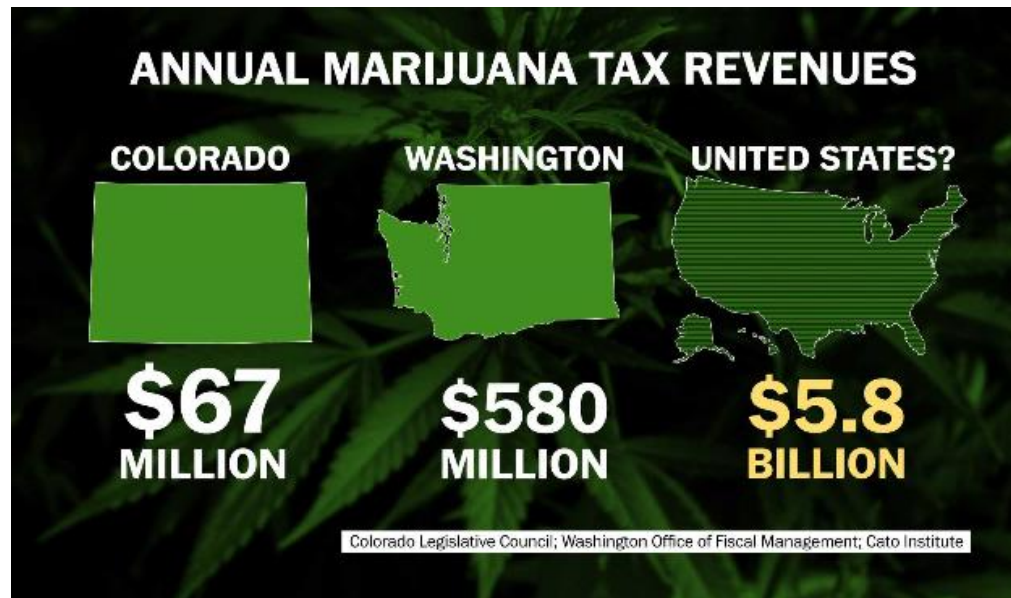
Explicit Federal Objectives

1. Dismantle the illicit market
2. Restrict youth access
3. Minimize harm



Implicit Federal Objectives

1. Benefit from increased economic activity
2. Increase government revenue



Public Safety

Concerns:

- Create a safe supply chain
- Protect youth and encourage responsible adult usage
- Minimize drug impaired driving

Solutions:

- Public information campaigns
- Regulate packaging and identify potency, quality and risks
- Limit consumption and use in public places
- Employers should prepare workplace guidelines
- Revenue supports police training, education and resources

Public Health

Concerns:

- THC potency
- Cognitive, physical and mental health effects
- Adolescent brain development and cannabis
- Cannabis use during pregnancy
- Cannabis dependence and addiction recovery programs

Solutions:

- Preventative health promotion framework
- Revenue supports prevention, education and treatment programs



Comparative Analysis

- Lessons from the successes and challenges experienced in Colorado, Washington and Oregon
- Uruguay offers an alternative framework
- The Canadian Context

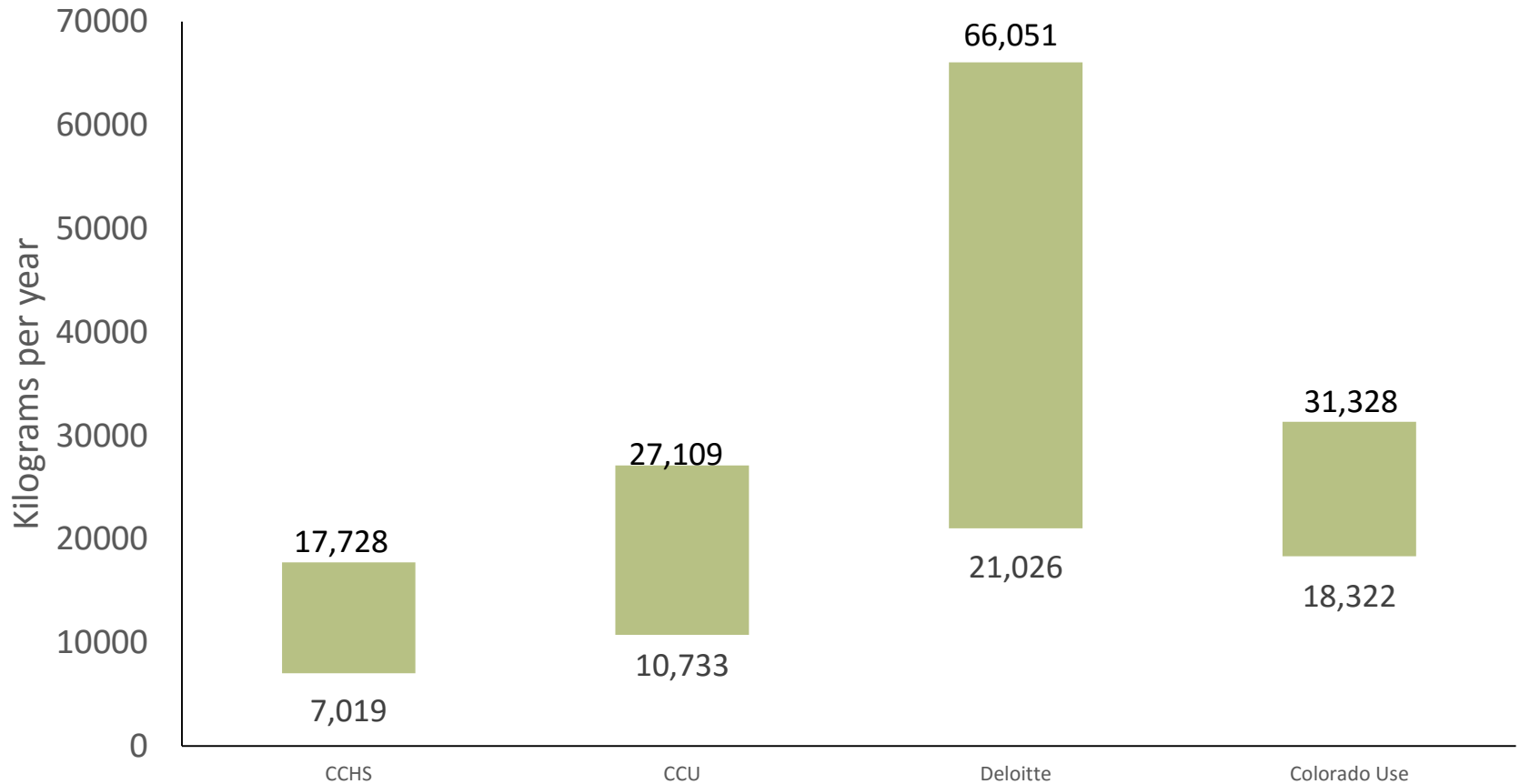


How Should Saskatchewan Respond?

Educate - Mitigate - Innovate - Regulate



The Market – Saskatchewan Demand



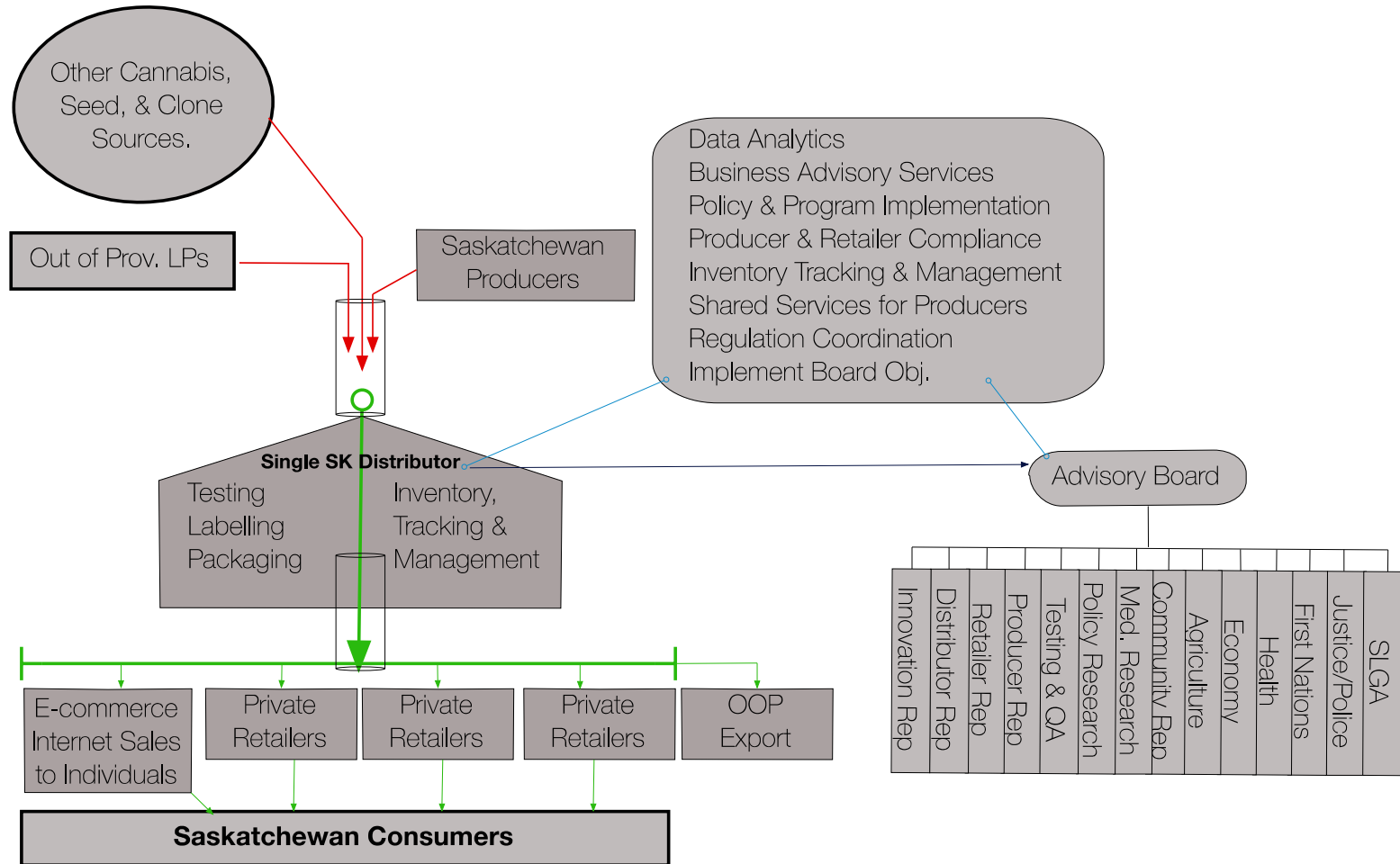
Retail Market

1. Align market forces and regulation by granting a limited number of geographically specific private retail licenses.
2. Require cannabis retailers to be stand alone shops (not selling tobacco or alcohol in particular) in major centers.
3. Enact zoning requirements preventing cannabis shops locating near to schools, youth centers, etc.
4. Develop a merit based model to grant retail licenses.
5. Expand the mandate of SLGA to include cannabis.
6. Move to single outlets for both recreational and medicinal cannabis.
7. Allow retailers to set prices to balance supply with demand.

Distribution

1. Establish a single distributor for cannabis products.
2. Mandate the distributor test cannabis for safety and potency.
3. Establish a governing board to over see the distributor and coordinate the implementation of policies and programs.
4. Require the distributor to work to reduce barriers to entry for producers.
5. Empower the producer to import and export cannabis to relieve shortages and/or develop export markets.
6. Keep taxes initially low to compete with the illicit market.

Market Overview



Summary

- The illicit market is large and well established across Canada and Saskatchewan.
- The existence of the illicit market places severe constraints on the policies to reduce youth access and general harms.
- Displacing the illicit market will be central to the long term success of the policy.
- The illicit market will not be displaced quickly or easily.
- Regulation, policy, and market forces must all be synchronized to meet the objectives of legalization and regulation.

This project would not have been possible without the following contributions:

Project Funding

- Drummond Group

Research Assistance

- Sherie Millington
- Angèle Poirier

Writing

- Anne Ballantyne
- Trent Blezy

Editorial & Design

- Erica Schindel
- Deanna Miller Design
- Editing Press

