

Rolling Stone: From California to Detroit, a marijuana revolution is sweeping the nation

By Jonathan Oosting | MLive.com

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While Michigan voters approved the legalization of medical marijuana in 2008, California voters will decide in November **whether to fully legalize** and tax the drug.

Mark Binelli reported on the movement for Rolling Stone's April issue, using Detroit as an example of marijuana's potential economic impact.

"From California to downtown Detroit, there's a green revolution sweeping across the nation -- and it's changing the weed business forever," Binelli wrote.

Medical pot has kick started a supply and service industry in Metro Detroit. While the law is designed to keep selling operations small, doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs are **making bank on marijuana** without moving the actual product.

Like several reporters before him, Binelli dropped in on **Med Grow Cannabis College**, the state's first medical-marijuana trade school located in Southfield, and spoke with founder Nick Tennant and a couple of class members hoping to cash in on the growing industry.

But he also paid a visit to John Sinclair, poet, pot activist and former manager of the MC5. In typically colorful fashion, Sinclair and co-manager Holice P. Wood said they're planning on opening a pot collective in Detroit, Wood humorously suggested he smoked weed with several former City Council members and argued that legalizing marijuana could turn around the struggling city.

March 26, RollingStone.com: One afternoon in Detroit, I visit John Sinclair, the poet and former manager of the MC5, and a longtime pot activist. Sinclair was famously busted in 1969 for possession of two joints and sentenced to 10 years in prison. By 1971, Sinclair was still doing time, so his supporters organized a massive "Ten for Two" rally in Ann Arbor, featuring John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Stevie Wonder and Allen Ginsberg. "In court, we'd been arguing that marijuana was not a narcotic, and that my sentence was cruel and unusual punishment," Sinclair, now 68, tells me. "Once the concert happened, though, the people in charge went, 'What the fuck? What are we doing? The Beatles are coming here for this guy?' I was out three days later."

Sinclair and Holice P. Wood, his outspoken co-manager, plan to open the first pot collective in Detroit. It will be called Trans-Love Energies, named for the Detroit commune co-founded by Sinclair in the Sixties. "Legalizing pot



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would be a viable way to turn this city around," says Wood. "Detroit is a place where even the people who have a real job also have a hustle going. And now most people have lost their real jobs." Wood, who notes that "there's no hope in hell of another industry coming here anytime soon," plans to make a detailed presentation to the Detroit City Council. He's confident that he will receive a warm reception. "The last City Council?" he says. "I probably smoked weed with half of them."

According to the magazine, marijuana is the top cash crop in 12 states, growers and farmers produced more than 22 million pounds of the plant in 2006 and prohibition costs taxpayers an estimated \$42 billion annually.

Marijuana remains illegal under federal law, but President Barack Obama last year indicated his administration will not seek to arrest medical marijuana users and suppliers who follow state laws.

Check out the full Rolling Stone article here.

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