**Phone Script**

Hello, my name is [insert full name] and I am a constituent of Senate/House District [District number] I have been made aware of legislation that proposes the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state of Ohio.

As a [parent, grandparent, business owner, educator, etc.] I am very concerned about any effort to expand access to or legalize recreational marijuana [in Ohio/in my community].

I am asking that you consider the impact marijuana expansion or legalization can have on our communities. **Please note:** [Feel free to use 2- 3 reasons below that most resonate with your message.]

* Tax revenue from marijuana accounts for less than one percent of state revenues where the drug is legal. No “legal” state has met its initial tax revenue projections.
* The potency of THC, the chemical in marijuana that causes the high, continues to rise from 1-3% in the 1970s to 12-23% today. THC concentrates can range anywhere between 20-99%. Marijuana today is not the marijuana of the past. Why would we consider legalizing a drug that continues to increase in potency?
* People who begin using marijuana before age 18 are 4 to 7 times more likely than adults to develop a cannabis use disorder. Legalizing will send a message to our youth that marijuana is not harmful, which has the potential to increase youth use.
* The marijuana industry targets kids by producing marijuana edibles in the forms of popular candy and snack brands and markets these drugs both offline and on social media.
* Marijuana is addictive and may cause mental illnesses or exacerbate mental illness, including anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, psychosis, and schizophrenia. These risks are heightened with youth use. Daily users of high-potency THC are five times more likely to develop a severe mental illness.
* Marijuana use can severely affect brain development in youth, leading to lower IQ and worsening mental health, academic, professional outcomes and life satisfaction.
* Marijuana use is linked to future substance misuse and addiction.
* Marijuana is often advertised as a solution for the opioid epidemic, with a claim that it can be a substitute for opioids in pain management and an effective treatment for opioid use disorder, yet the JAMA Internal Medicine Journal stated that, “The opioid crisis appears to be worsening where marijuana has been legalized.”
* According to a study reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, employees who tested positive for marijuana had 55% more industrial accidents, 85% more injuries, and 75% greater absenteeism compared to those who tested negative.
* In Colorado, one in every four road deaths has involved a marijuana-impaired driver.
* Illicit markets have thrived in every “legal” state, such as Oregon, where illegal marijuana makes up more than 70% of the market.
* Legalization is often touted as a social justice initiative aimed at decriminalizing marijuana and expunging the record of low-level offenders. However, it has shown not to have the intended effect on criminal justice reform. Marijuana arrests nearly tripled the year after legalization in Washington D.C. If we want criminal justice reform, we need to pass laws to create true reform, legalizing drugs cannot be our best option to criminal justice reform.
* Among concerns of systemic injustice against lower-income, minority communities, legalization of marijuana only harms these communities further by promoting increased drug use and the accompanying negative social consequences.
* A 2018 Centennial Institute study on the economic and social costs of legalized marijuana in Colorado found that it cost the state $4.50 to counteract the effects of marijuana legalization for each dollar brought in by marijuana tax revenues.

As your constituent and as a [parent, grandparent, business owner, educator, etc.], I ask that you take the health and safety of Ohio’s youth, families and communities into account as you look at the proposals within these two bills or others that might come before the [House/Senate] with a high degree of caution.

Thank you for your time.

**\*\*If your call goes to voice mail, remember to leave your phone number and ask for a call back.**