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For Immediate Release

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Steady Increase in Registered 18-20 Year-Old Medi-pot Users in Colorado: Florida Could Be Worse If Pot is Passed!

St. Petersburg – Recently, Colorado doctor, Christian Thurstone, analyzed the state’s data on so-called medical marijuana cardholders and found a steady increase among 18-20 year-olds. Tracking from December 2009 to May 2013 shows the number of cardholders has increased by more than 45%, of those, 78% were male and 72% were using the drug for “severe pain.” In Colorado, anyone over the age of 18 can get a medical marijuana license without parental consent. However, children under 18 may obtain a medical marijuana license with the signature of a consenting parent or legal guardian.

“These numbers are alarming and serve as a cautionary tale of what Florida is potentially facing in 2014 if medi-pot is passed,” says Amy Ronshausen, Executive Director of The Florida Coalition Alliance. “Backers of the initiative claim that only a limited number of people would qualify but the reality, as seen in the Colorado numbers, is quite different. We know the unintended consequences of defining pain. Criminal doctors and med-seeking patients have taken advantage of our past loose regulations and have allowed for the proliferation of pill mills. Florida is working hard to curb our prescription drug epidemic; we cannot afford to enhance the disaster of pills mills by adding pot shops,” concluded Ronshausen.

“Every day anti-drug coalitions throughout Florida work to prevent drug and alcohol use by young people. Research shows us that marijuana can have significant impacts on the developing brain, including a decrease in IQ points,” said Cindy Grant, Executive Director of Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance. “The proposed ballot initiative could put Florida in a worse position than other states that have legalized marijuana as a medicine because it does not set any age restrictions on who can qualify and does not require parental consent for minors.

If you would like to set up an interview about this issue with someone from the Florida Coalition Alliance or the Hillsborough Anti-Drug Alliance, please contact Lana Beck (727) 828-0211 or (727) 403-7571.

Florida Coalition Alliance’s mission is to build upon the foundations of community coalitions in Florida by providing opportunities for training, networking, communication, collaboration, legislative advocacy, sharing of resources and resource development.

Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance’s mission is to build a community where youth and families are safe, healthy and free of substance abuse and addiction.

For more information go to www.unmaskingmarijuana.org.

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