Case for Protecting the Brain:
Keeping the Federal Controlled Substances Act in Place and Providing Non-Punitive, Justice System-Based Public Health Options to Address the Use of Marijuana, Opiates, and Other Psychoactive and Mood-Altering Drugs in America

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Strategies will be outlined that emphasize the following:

- Discouraging marijuana use and use of other mood-altering substances, stopping and reversing current trends and providing a range of recommended policies, programs, and approaches, particularly non-punitive justice system-based options aimed at helping individuals get off drugs.

- Recognizing the spread of marijuana use and substance abuse in general as a significant public health and safety problem that is posing an increasing threat to the stability of society and the psychological, mental, and physical health of all, including rising generations.

- Recognizing that legalization constitutes an abrogation of the Federal Controlled Substances Act as well as international treaties to which the US is a signatory.

- Realizing that legalization in the context of American culture is tantamount to “sanctioning” the use of marijuana and other substances that interfere with the healthy development and functioning of the brain, mind, and body.
Providing and promulgating alternatives to penalties or adjudication, providing and promoting policies that do not legalize the use of marijuana, but keep it at least a misdemeanor so that individuals can be provided non-punitive options and expunge their record or avoid adjudication if they complete drug court-type programs, counseling/education programs, or treatment and rehabilitation.

- Identifying and promoting criminal justice-system based, and community and school-based, and religious and spiritual community-based approaches to addressing the problems of drug-taking behavior and promoting alternatives.

- Encouraging alternatives to drug use, constructive, creative, healthy activities that aim at the development of healthy fully functioning drug-free individuals. Identifying and encouraging duplication of promising programs and policies.

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