

# Press Release



## Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (RMHIDTA)

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## DENVER -- Setting the Record Straight on Marijuana “Spin Doctors”

### Crime in Denver

**Spin:** Drug Policy Alliance’s recent *Status Report: Marijuana Legalization in Colorado After One Year of Retail Sales [2014] and Two Years of Decriminalization [2013]*” claims: “Since the first retail marijuana stores opened on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, the state of Colorado has benefitted from a decrease in crime rates...” The report then cites some crime categories in the City of Denver.

**Truth:** According to Denver Police Department’s National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), total reported crimes for all categories, not just the few selected by the Drug Policy Alliance, shows an overall increase of 8.6 percent from 2012 through 2013, the first year recreational marijuana was legalized. The increase continued through 2014 with a 2.5 percent increase from 2013.

## Denver Police Department Reported Crimes

2012	2013	2014
44,338	48,153	49,365

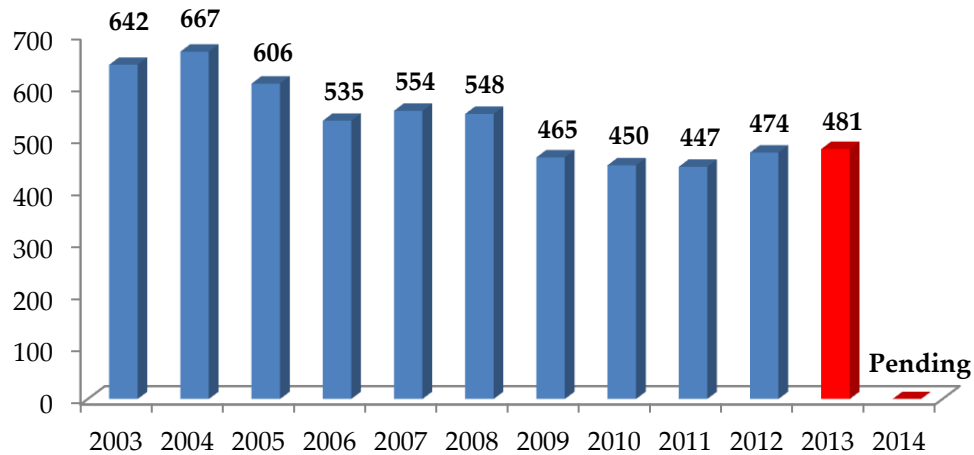
**NOTE:** There are a variety of reasons that reported crimes increase from year-to-year for which marijuana use may contribute; however, causation is difficult to substantiate.

### Traffic Fatalities

**Spin:** The same Drug Policy Alliance’s *Status Report: Marijuana Legalization in Colorado After One Year of Retail Sales [2014] and Two Years of Decriminalization [2013]*” claims: “The decline in fatalities in 2014 marks a continuation of a 12-year long downward trend in traffic fatalities in the state of Colorado.”

**Truth:** According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) with information provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT): The past 12 years have not shown a consecutive year to year decrease. In fact, the data shows four separate years where the number of fatalities increased including 2013, the first year recreational marijuana was legalized. The 2014 data is still in the process of being finalized by CDOT.

## 2003-2014 Fatalities



**NOTE:** There are several factors contributing to the number of fatalities that may or may not involve impaired drivers under the influence of marijuana. These factors include miles driven, weather, number of drivers under the influence, safety of vehicles, road conditions, etc.

### **BOTTOM LINE**

The public has a right to accurate, factually-presented information without the “spin” used by some advocates.

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