U.S. Sen. **DICK DURBIN**, D-Illinois, says he doesn’t think Illinois should rush into making recreational use of marijuana legal.

Durbin, of Springfield, was asked about the issue when appearing on another topic last week at the Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation.

“I can remember the worst times, when it came to marijuana, and when I was a lawyer in this town, and somebody with a 17-year-old son would come in and say, ‘My kid just got busted for smoking pot,’” Durbin said. “They wanted to know ... whether or not there was any way to spare their son from the embarrassment and possibly life-changing results of being prosecuted for smoking a joint.”

He said he thought that was “extreme,” but “now we’ve got to take care that we don’t go to the other extreme.”

Because of conflicts in state and federal law, Durbin said, the federal government hasn’t tested marijuana, like it does other drugs, for safety and effectiveness. While he is OK with medical use of marijuana to provide pain relief and help alleviate the “devastation of opioids,” he said, “what’s missing here is the usual course of clinical trials” he thinks are needed before recreational use moves forward.

Durbin said he recommends a recent article by **MALCOLM GLADWELL** in The New Yorker. The headline of the [online version](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/01/14/is-marijuana-as-safe-as-we-think) is: “Is Marijuana as Safe as We Think?”

He said it discusses “the impact of legalizing marijuana in many states ... and what they have seen as a result of it: the increase in traffic accidents; certain mental health conditions seem to be more prevalent in those states. These are all legitimate clinical questions that should be asked and tested.”

Durbin also said challenges include figuring out how to measure impairment to protect people driving and operating heavy machinery.

“Those sorts of things are legitimate questions,” Durbin said. “We had possibly good answers when it came to alcohol, but when it comes to marijuana, I think we’re in new territory.”

He also said he knows that in the case of Illinois, the legalization decision is up to state officials.

The above was published February 2 in the State-Journal Register. <https://www.sj-r.com/opinion/20190202/bernard-schoenburg-davis-looks-forward-to-second-trump-term>

**Medical Marijuana and Decriminalizing Marijuana have Made Illinois Less Safe**

Senator Durbin is smart to talk about the increase in traffic deaths. A short investigation shows that many Illinois residents have been killed by stoned drivers over the past few years. These include

[Isiah McKee, 3 months, died July 25, 2015](http://thesouthern.com/news/local/baby-dies-following-wednesday-s-fatal-car-accident-in-carterville/article_7aaadb77-e682-5466-9ce4-a382c6765478.html)

Carter Vo, 8 [years on bike, May 21, 2012](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/22/carter-vo-8-year-old-skok_n_1535953.html)

[Katelyn Jonak](http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20170228/news/170228927/), 9, killed in Aurora, October, 2016

[Alonzo De La Torre , 17](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2008-04-24/news/0804231171_1_probation-county-jail-reckless-homicide)  Jan, 28 ,2008

[Aric Wooley, 17](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/wheaton-glen-ellyn/news/ct-dupage-driving-charges-upgraded-met-20170105-story.html)

[Aaron Dunigan, 18, killed on prom night, May 19, 2015](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/news/ct-calumet-city-crash-charges-met-20150520-story.html)

Raine Ewart-Picasso, 18

[Benjamin Allison, 20](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-isu-hit-and-run-sentence-met-20151120-story.html)

[Mihirteg Doddupalli, 21](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/naperville-sun/crime/ct-naperville-quarry-fatal-crash-sentence-20160310-story.html)

[Sajaad Syed, 21](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/naperville-sun/crime/ct-naperville-quarry-fatal-crash-sentence-20160310-story.html)

[Sarah Shepard, 21](https://www.theherald-news.com/2014/05/20/day-one-of-trial-focuses-on-slush-and-marijuana/ay8z1l2/)

[Cheyenne Cardosi, 21](https://www.theherald-news.com/2014/05/20/day-one-of-trial-focuses-on-slush-and-marijuana/ay8z1l2/)

[Stephanie Kostenko, 22](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/lake-county-news-sun/news/ct-lns-dui-fatality-sentence-st-0407-20170406-story.html) May 5, 2016

[Amanda Matthiessen](https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20180810/huntley-man-charged-with-dui-reckless-homicide-in-fatal-crash), 24, May 9, 2018

[Alexis Danley, 27, and unborn baby](https://accidentdatacenter.com/us/illinois/chicago-il/minooka/17/06/30/alexis-danley-27-and-unborn-baby-killed-head-collision-ridge-road-minooka-illinoishttp:/wgntv.com/2017/07/05/teens-rescue-girl-from-horrific-crash-that-killed-her-pregnant-mother/), on June 29, 2017

[Giovanni Roman’s cousin, 26](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-man-charged-in-fatal-crash-that-killed-1-seriously-injured-another-20170419-story.html)

[Enrique Moreno, 28](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/chi-brother-charged-with-homicide-in-stevenson-crash-20150501-story.html)

[David Lyerla, 31](http://thesouthern.com/news/local/baby-dies-following-wednesday-s-fatal-car-accident-in-carterville/article_7aaadb77-e682-5466-9ce4-a382c6765478.html), July 25,2015

[Eugene Ratliff, 32](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-09-28/news/ct-met-police-chase-death-20130928_1_stop-sign-prosecutors-marijuana)

[Javier Castrejon, 38](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-man-accused-of-reckless-homicide-20170805-story.html), June 2017

[Roger Phillips, 38](http://www.theherald-news.com/2017/08/08/shorewood-man-dies-more-than-a-week-after-motorcycle-crash/arpnmwv/)

[Amando Chavez, 41](https://patch.com/illinois/arlingtonheights/mma-fighter-accused-driving-high-fatal-schaumburg-crash)

[Angela King, 43](http://www.pjstar.com/x2102588992/Washington-teen-sentenced-to-prison-for-motorcyclists-death)

[Giuseppe Garzano, 44](https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20180719/prosecutors-forest-preserve-worker-who-caused-fatal-crash-had-thc-in-his-system)

[Tina Douglas, 48](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/news/ct-sta-marissa-martin-trial-st-1206-20151204-story.html)

[Janice Wendling, 52](http://www.mysuburbanlife.com/2016/06/27/police-report-teen-was-driving-morris-district-54-principals-suv-during-fatal-crash/aeo2weo/) June 2016

[Mark Wendling, 53](http://www.mysuburbanlife.com/2016/06/27/police-report-teen-was-driving-morris-district-54-principals-suv-during-fatal-crash/aeo2weo/)

[Mark Cipolla, 56](http://www.theherald-news.com/2015/03/25/two-drivers-charged-with-dui-after-pedestrian-killed/a9yezxl/)

[Juan Rivera, 56](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/news/ct-calumet-city-crash-charges-met-20150520-story.html)

[William Molthop](https://nypost.com/2017/12/22/stoned-driver-in-deadly-dui-was-playing-on-social-media-when-he-crashed-prosecutors/), 60

[Phillip Rangel](https://www.seattlecaraccidentlawyerblog.com/2011/12/texting_driver_sentenced_in_pe.html), 60

[Vincent Neri](https://nypost.com/2017/12/22/stoned-driver-in-deadly-dui-was-playing-on-social-media-when-he-crashed-prosecutors/), 62,

[Janina Kasparek, 65](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/chi-cops-teen-driver-had-drugs-in-system-when-woman-killed-by-car-20140125-story.html)

[Janice Willenborg, 74](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/aurora-beacon-news/news/ct-abn-man-charged-2016-fatal-crash-st-0508-20170508-story.html)