

CURTIS GARDNER Protect local schools and local tax dollars and vote ‘no’ on Prop 119

By

[CURTIS GARDNER, Guest Columnist](#)

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We have all worked together in Colorado and the Aurora community to ensure that the cannabis industry is responsible, well-regulated, transparent, and supportive of critical causes like education and mental health services.

In fact, the cannabis industry in Colorado has contributed more than \$330 million dollars to the construction of new schools in our state, more than \$234 Million dollars to support public health and human services such as counseling and addiction treatment, \$6 million to public safety, and \$15 million to affordable housing.

This also includes fully funding the construction of the new recreation center in southeast Aurora.

There is a misleading initiative on the ballot this year, Proposition 119. This measure attempts to raise marijuana taxes without any transparency or accountability for programs not supported by Coloradans. If this measure passes, state sales taxes on marijuana will increase by 5% making total marijuana taxes more than 30%.

Proposition 119, claims to be about after school programming, but actually takes tax dollars away from public education without any oversight or transparency for voters, teachers or local school boards.

This initiative pulls money from teacher salaries and school funding and gives it to private companies, that may be outside the state or outside the country, to provide programming with or without parent approval.

This measure needlessly raises taxes on not just Colorado consumers, but Colorado patients and veterans who are using marijuana to relieve serious medical conditions like seizures, post-traumatic stress disorder and cancer symptoms.

Aurora taxpayers should not be footing the bill for the pet projects of out of state special interests. We should be saving our local tax dollars for local needs.

I encourage a no vote on Proposition 119.

— *Curtis Gardner is an At-Large Councilmember for the City of Aurora*