

# Even Drug War Advocates Agree: Mandatory Minimum Sentencing is Bad!



***Stephen G. Breyer, Supreme Court Justice***

**"Mandatory sentencing laws should be abolished."**

**Source:** United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer, in a speech at the University of Nebraska College, November 20, 1998.

***Barry B. McCaffrey, "Drug Czar"***

**" - mandatory sentencing ties the hands of judges too tightly and prevents them from exercising discretion and good judgment." "By revising these sentencing rules, our intent is to broaden support for our drug policies, restore respect for the law and foster a more effective division of responsibility between federal, state and local law enforcement."**

**Source:** Prepared Remarks by Barry R. McCaffrey, director, Office of National Drug Control Policy Before the First Annual Criminal Justice and Substance Abuse Conference, Albany, New York, June 29, 1999.

***Joseph A. Califano, Jr., President, CASA***

**" Laws that prescribe mandatory sentences for possession of small amounts of marijuana are overkill. In general, mandatory sentences, especially those requiring drug and alcohol abusers and addicts to serve their entire sentence, are counterproductive. We need all the carrots and sticks we can muster to help these individuals shake their habit. Mandatory sentences take away any potential that an early release might hold as an incentive for such an inmate to enter treatment. Such sentences also remove the leverage that parole offers to get recently released inmates to continue treatment and aftercare or face a return to prison."**

**Source:** Joseph A. Califano, Jr. Chairman and President, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University on release of Non-Medical Marijuana: Rite of Passage or Russian Roulette? July 1999.

## Let Judges Judge. Let's not tie their hands.

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