

## Talking Points: The “\$30 Million Dollar” Myth

### Question 2 Proponents claim that Question 2 will result in a \$30M savings to police budgets:

- Whitney Taylor on Dan Rea talk show with DA O’Keefe early October 2008: “We spend almost \$30 Million a year *on just arrest and booking.*”
- From proponent’s website and e-mail alerts: “Question 2 will save Massachusetts taxpayers almost \$30 million a year in arrest and booking costs alone. These funds should stay in police and community coffers to fight violent and serious crime.”

### Opponents of Question 2 respond:

- Question 2 proponents ADMIT that most marijuana cases don’t go to trial or result in incarceration, *so the real savings would come from reduced use of police resources*. They claim that the savings will come from eliminating the time police spend on interacting with an offender and writing a report. Think it through:
  - Stand-alone marijuana charges represent a tiny fraction - - - between 1% - 3% - - - of all criminal arraignments, and many of those were not arrestees, but were given summonses by the police.
  - Police officers are salaried employees. They receive the same salary, regardless of whether they make zero, ten or 100 arrests, so this ballot question will not result in any savings to police budgets.
  - Question 2 requires that the police issue a citation to the offender so that the town can levy a civil fine on him. This requires a citation issued, a report written, a trip to town hall to file a copy of the citation, and labor by town employees to follow through on collection. Where is the time savings????
  - And as to all the revenue this civil process will engender? If all the marijuana possession charges in 2007 were instead civil fines, it would result in each of our 351 cities and towns getting a daily return of **\$5.46**.