

How Best to Protect & Promote the Public Health
in Jurisdictions Opting to Legalize Recreational Cannabis

INFORMATION ABOUT THE O'NEILL INSTITUTE, WOLA, AND KEY STAFF

The O'Neill Institute for National & Global Health Law

This project will be housed at Georgetown University Law Center, under the auspices of the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law. The Institute's mission is to provide innovative solutions for the leading health problems in the U.S. and globally. The Institute draws upon Georgetown University's considerable intellectual resources, including the School of Medicine, the McCourt School for Public Policy, the School of Nursing and Health Studies, and the Kennedy Institute of Ethics.

The essential vision for the O'Neill Institute rests upon the proposition that the law is a fundamental tool for solving critical health problems in global, national, and local communities. By contributing to a more powerful and deeper understanding of the multiple ways in which law can be used to improve health, the O'Neill Institute works to advance scholarship, research, and teaching that will encourage key decision-makers in the public, private, and civil society sectors to employ the law as a positive tool for enabling more people to lead healthier lives. The Institute has ongoing collaborations with international and domestic organizations on a range of health issues, including global health governance, global tobacco control strategies in industrializing and developing countries, and infectious disease control.

The O'Neill Institute's audience includes policymakers, scholars, and students; and it has extensive experience coordinating and hosting a range of project-related conferences and academic seminars, such as a series of expert working group meetings on HIV/AIDS policy regarding the future of the Ryan White AIDS Program; a semester-long colloquium on national and global health law; and a week-long summer program on global health law topics.

Key Institute Staff Involved in the Project:

Oscar A. Cabrera (Executive Director) earned his law degree in his home country of Venezuela, and his Master of Laws (LL.M.), with concentration in Health Law and Policy, at the University of Toronto. His primary areas of expertise include the relationship between non-communicable diseases and the law and health and human rights. He is especially focused on how legal interventions disproportionately impact vulnerable populations, and the role of international law in domestic health laws and policies. Oscar has worked on projects with the World Health Organization, the Pan-American Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, among others. Oscar has extensive contacts in the legal, public health, and human rights communities in Latin America, including key officials and non-government experts in Uruguay who work on tobacco control and cannabis legalization issues.

Eric Lindblom (Senior Scholar) is a lawyer and policy analyst and the former Director of the Office of Policy at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Tobacco Products. He has extensive experience and expertise relating to the marketing of tobacco products and the many different national and state strategies for reducing tobacco use and its harms. Eric has helped draft tobacco

control legislation, ballot questions and regulations, and has numerous contacts in the public health research and advocacy communities. Eric has a BA in political science from Yale and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Fernanda Alonso (Associate) previously worked at the Drug Policy Program at the *Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica* (CIDE) in Mexico. During her three years at CIDE, Fernanda worked on a number of drug policy projects including co-writing legislative bills and white papers for the Mexico City Legislature on regulating cannabis and harm reduction, and for the Mexican Congress on decriminalizing cannabis. She also helped create CIDE's Drug Policy Program and coordinated a multidisciplinary group of 15 professors and researchers in a Drug Policy Monitor for Mexican drug control policy and a Drug Policy Seminar. She also organized the *III Seminario de Política de Drogas en América Latina*, with experts from the United States and Latin America. She has also written a number of articles and papers on harm reduction and public health approaches to drug policy.

Lawrence O. Gostin (Faculty Director) directs the O'Neill Institute. He is an internationally acclaimed scholar, often called the father of public health law as a formal discipline. Among other positions beyond those he holds at Georgetown University and its law school, Prof. Gostin is the Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center on Public Health Law and Human Rights, serves as the Health Law and Ethics Editor and a columnist for the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and is the founding Editor-in-Chief of *Laws* (an open access law journal). Prof. Gostin has led major law reform initiatives in the U.S., including the drafting of the Model Emergency Health Powers Act to combat bioterrorism. He also leads a WHO team drafting a Model Public Health Law. For more on Prof. Gostin and the O'Neill Institute, please see the Institute's website at <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/oneillinstitute/about/index.cfm>.

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)

WOLA is a leading research and advocacy organization advancing human rights in the Americas. Combining decades of high-level access, regional expertise, and cutting edge advocacy on a variety of public policy themes, WOLA is a unique convener and actor in shaping public policies. In particular, WOLA tackles problems that transcend borders and that require both domestic and international solutions, such as reforming drug policies. Through strategic collaborations we advocate for more just societies in the Americas. The *Washington Post* has recognized WOLA as one of the best-managed non-profits in the Washington area.

Key WOLA Staff Involved in the Project:

John Walsh (Senior Associate) coordinates WOLA's drug policy program, supporting more humane and effective drug policies in the Americas. Respected for his careful policy analysis and effective advocacy, Walsh has helped establish WOLA as a key voice in the growing movement to make human rights and harm reduction central concerns of drug policy. His work has contributed to the recent opening of the global debate over how to reform drug policy. Walsh has a BA from Georgetown, and a MA in Public Policy from Johns Hopkins University.