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# Senate leader calls for raising minimum age to buy tobacco products to 21

(Reuters) - U.S. Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell said on Thursday he plans to introduce legislation to raise the minimum age for buying tobacco products, including vaping devices, to 21 from 18 to curb their “epidemic” use among teens.

McConnell said here the bill would be introduced in May. Shares of Marlboro maker Altria Group Inc, which owns a 35 percent stake in e-cigarette maker Juul, fell 3 percent on the news. Philip Morris International and U.S-listed shares of British American Tobacco were also trading lower.

“For some time, I’ve been hearing from the parents who are seeing an unprecedented spike in vaping among their teenage children. ... Unfortunately, it’s reaching epidemic levels around the country,” the Republican senator from Kentucky said in a statement.

McConnell’s proposal comes as states and cities across the United States have moved to raise the legal age for purchasing tobacco in an effort to prevent addiction at young ages. A 2015 study from the National Academy of Medicine found that among adults who became daily smokers, about 90 percent started using cigarettes before they were 19.

The study found that raising the minimum legal age to 21 would prevent 223,000 premature deaths.

So far 12 states have enacted laws to raise the minimum age to 21, including New Jersey and California. Lawmakers in New York state and Maryland have also approved legislation. In a statement, Altria Group Chief Executive Howard Willard said the company “strongly supports” McConnell’s move, calling it “the most effective action to reverse rising underage e-vapor usage rates.” A representative for British

American Tobacco did not immediately respond to a request for comment. E-cigarette makers are already under pressure from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which laid out plans in March to clamp down on the use of the popular nicotine devices among teens.

Altria made a big bet on e-cigarettes in December with its \$12.8 billion purchase of a 35 percent stake in Juul Labs Inc, which makes a sleek line of devices that became popular among teenagers, prompting an FDA crackdown.

Altria Group has been a major contributor to McConnell’s campaigns, according to data from the Center for Responsive Politics, which tracks money in politics. McConnell’s campaign received \$31,900 from Altria employees or political action committees in the most recent election cycle, making him one of the top four recipients of campaign cash in Congress, according to the data.



A man smokes at the Firefly Music Festival in Dover, Delaware U.S., June 16, 2018. REUTERS/Mark Makela



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**Editor's Choice**



A masked Kashmiri demonstrator looks on as he prepares to throw a stone towards Indian police during a protest after the end of the second phase of general election in Srinagar



FILE PHOTO: Urmila Matondkar, Bollywood actress-turned-politician who recently joined India's main opposition Congress party, gestures during her election campaign rally in Mumbai



People wait in queues to cast their votes outside a polling station during the second phase of general election in Hojai



FILE PHOTO: Ukrainian presidential candidate and comedian Volodymyr Zelenskyy gets into a car after undergoing a drugs and alcohol test in Kiev



Gayatri, a 24-year-old Master of Engineering graduate who has been unemployed for four months poses during a job fair in Chinchwad



Tourists take pictures of television reporters working on a sidewalk outside of the Justice Department, after the release of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report on Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election in Washington



Official binders given to reporters with Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report on Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election are seen in Washington



A statue of Jesus Christ on the cross is pictured during a mass for the celebration of the Last Supper at the Sacre-Coeur Basilica of Montmartre, days after a massive fire devastated large parts of the structure of the gothic Notre-Dame Cathedral, in Paris



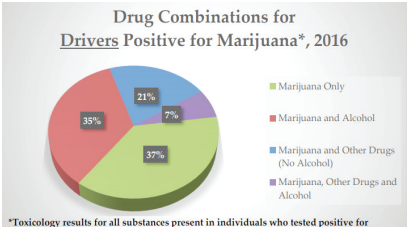
As more states legalize marijuana for medical or recreational use, concern is rising about the risk of people getting behind the wheel while high. The latest highway safety statistics confirm the number of drivers testing positive for pot has increased dramatically -- but driving under the influence of alcohol remains a far more deadly threat.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration survey, conducted in 2013 and 2014, found that the number of drivers with marijuana in their systems grew by nearly 50 percent since 2007, rising from 8.6 percent in 2007 to 12.6 percent in 2014.

Overall, 22 percent of drivers tested positive for some kind of drug that could affect safety. That includes illegal drugs as well as prescription and over-the-counter medications.

While drug-impaired driving was on the rise, NHTSA said the the number of drivers on the road with alcohol in their systems has declined by nearly one-third since 2007. Tougher laws, drunk driving crackdowns and public education campaigns have helped reduce the number of cases by more than three-quarters since the agency began conducting roadside surveys in 1973.

The anonymous surveys gather data in dozens of locations across the country from drivers who agree to participate.



“The rising prevalence of marijuana and other drugs is a challenge to everyone who is dedicated to saving lives and reducing crashes,” NHTSA head Mark Rosekind warned.

The report cited “evidence that marijuana use impairs psychomotor skills, divided attention, lane tracking, and cognitive functions” -- all essential skills for safe driving.

But a separate survey, the largest of its kind, offered another take on the issue -- highlighting the fact that driving under the influence of marijuana may not be nearly as hazardous as the impairment caused by alcohol.

## Is It As Risky As Drinking And Driving?

# Cannabis Smokers Behind The Wheel Are On The Rise

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The study assessing the comparative risk of drunk and drugged driving was conducted in Virginia Beach, Virginia, over a 20-month period; it involved the collection of data from more than 3,000 drivers involved in a crash, and more than 6,000 crash-free drivers for comparison.

That survey found that while marijuana users are more likely to be involved in accidents, the increased risk may be largely due to the fact that marijuana users are more likely to be part of demographic groups at higher risk of crashes generally. In particular, marijuana users are more likely to be young men -- a group already at high risk.



“Drivers should never get behind the wheel impaired, and we know that marijuana impairs judgment, reaction times and awareness,” said Jeff Michael, the agency’s associate administrator for re-

search and program development.

One complication to assessing crash risk by drivers who have used marijuana is that it can be detected in the human body for hours and sometimes days after the high from smoking has dissipated. Other studies have shown that a marijuana high typically peaks within 30 minutes and is gone within about three hours after ingestion. But unlike with alcohol, drivers high on pot tend to be aware that they are impaired and try to compensate by driving slowly, avoiding risky actions such as passing other cars, and allowing extra room between vehicles. On the other hand, combining marijuana with alcohol appears to eliminate the pot smoker’s exaggerated caution and to increase driving impairment beyond the effects of either substance alone. In the NHTSA survey, about 8 percent of drivers during weekend nighttime hours were found to have some alcohol in their system, and 1.5 percent were found with .08 percent or higher breath alcohol content - the legal limit in every state. Drivers with any alcohol in their systems and drivers testing greater than .08 were both down by about 30 percent from the previous survey in 2007. Both groups are also down by more than three-quarters since

the first survey in 1973. (Courtesy www.cbsnews.com)

### Related

How Long Should You Wait to Drive After Using Recreational Marijuana?



It’s recommended that you should let at least four hours pass between the time you smoke marijuana and the time you drive a car. The window for taking marijuana orally is six hours. However, these guidelines come with a few caveats.

### The Trouble With Guidelines

However, it’s difficult to set hard parameters for safe time passed between smoking marijuana and getting behind the wheel because the effects of marijuana vary widely according to potency and tolerance. They are, in short, dose-dependent. So while it is helpful to suggest a window of hours between smoking and driving, it’s even more useful to get into the details.

### Don’t Be High

No one should drive while high. If you’re “a little high,” as measured by how strong your buzz is, you shouldn’t get behind the wheel. Many of us think we can drive with a slight high. The first parameter for safe time passed between smoking marijuana and driving is that you shouldn’t be high at all.

### Don’t Be Overconfident

Smokers who drive can underestimate the time they need by forgetting these factors: **There is a period during which you might not be feeling the “high”** — you’re no longer recreating with marijuana — but your senses and reflexes aren’t yet what you’d like them to be for getting

behind the wheel.

**There are levels of being “straight” after smoking that are appropriate to normal driving conditions but not for emergencies.** Skidding on black ice or having to swerve away from a pedestrian stepping into the street from between two parked cars, for example. It’s usually recommended that eight hours should pass between the feeling of euphoria has passed and the moment you drive.



Notice that there’s a certain inconsistency between that recommendation and the one listed further above (that you shouldn’t drive for four hours after smoking).

When recommendations clash, it’s better to go with the more conservative option and decide that you shouldn’t drive for eight hours after smoking marijuana.

A smoker might handle his or her vehicle faultlessly but still be in legal trouble if something goes wrong completely beyond your control.

### Marijuana, Driving, and the Law

Don’t make the mistake of thinking that because marijuana might now be legal in your state it’s legal to drive while high. Even if there hasn’t been an accident, if you’re pulled over while driving high you’ll be cited for Driving Under the Influence, just as though you had had a martini.

Laws vary from state to state. Some have a zero-tolerance policy, together with broad interpretive powers granted to the police officer who has pulled you over. Don’t be surprised if the mere presence of weed paraphernalia in your vehicle is enough for a judge to decide in favor of the officer even though you hadn’t smoked in several days.

### Conclusion

Marijuana is criticized for leading to a sedentary lifestyle. When it comes to driving, let this criticism become sound advice. The safest place to be high is still on your couch. (Courtesy https://euflora-colorado.com)

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***Possibly The Largest Caravan Yet***  
**New Caravan Of 12,000**  
**Migrants Heading To U.S.**



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Another massive migrant caravan is on its way to the U.S. from Central America. The possibly largest-ever caravan from Central America has amassed more than 12,000 people, some of who intend to pursue refugee status in Mexico, while many more are headed for the U.S., the New York Times reported Friday. The number in the caravan isn't just an estimate – it's the number of migrants who have requested visas from the Mexican government.

**Dan Bongino**  
√ @dbongino

**Newest Migrant Caravan Grows to More Than 12,000 Members**  
3,793  
9:00 AM - Jan 28, 2019  
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**The migrant caravan that formed on January 15 in Honduras has now grown from 2,000 to over 12,000 members, according to Breitbart.**  
3,830 people are talking about this

On Jan. 17, Mexico's new president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, has vowed to issue one-year humanitarian visas that will allow migrants to travel and settle in Mexico. It is part of Obrador's policies aimed at reducing migration and spurring job growth in Mexico. As of Thursday, 8,446 adults and 1,897 children had applied for the visas, most of which are Honduras nationals, according to the Washington Post. Obrador's new visa policy is said to be a huge attractor of migrants, though less than 1,000 visas have been granted so far. President Trump tweeted to acknowledge the caravan on Saturday, saying, "We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!"

**Donald J. Trump**  
√ @realDonaldTrump

We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!  
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Trump later followed up with, "Only fools, or people with a political agenda, don't want a Wall or Steel Barrier to protect our Country from Crime, Drugs and Human Trafficking. It will happen – it always does!"

**Donald J. Trump**  
√ @realDonaldTrump

Only fools, or people with a political agenda, don't want a Wall or Steel Barrier to protect our Country from Crime, Drugs and Human Trafficking. It will happen – it always does!  
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The Mexican government released data showing that 132,000 illegal immigrants were detained throughout 2018. The U.S. Border Patrol captured nearly 400,000 illegal immigrants between Oct. 2017 and Sept. 2018 – before the Central American caravans even began in the fall. Mexican authorities stopped 18,000 migrants in October, and another 12,000 in November. With the new humanitarian visas, they are completely shifting their approach on migration. Thousands of migrants still remain in Tijuana, Mexico, where the last major caravans stopped in their attempt to cross into the U.S. There, migrants are awaiting asylum interviews with U.S. immigration agencies after the U.S. mandated that migrants must remain in Mexico while their asylum cases are pending. Mexico had offered jobs and assistance to migrants in the previous caravans, but the migrants refused, instead wanting to pursue asylum in the U.S. (Courtesy americanmilitarynews.com)

**Related**  
**Mexico Moves to Encourage Caravan Migrants to Stay and Work**



Migrants in Huixtla, Mexico, try-

**ing to get a free ride on a sugar cane truck during their journey toward the United States. (Photo/Reuters)**

CIUDAD HIDALGO, Mexico — Mexico's new president has moved decisively to encourage migrants fleeing poverty and violence in Central America to stay and work in Mexico, making it easier for them to get visas and work permits and promoting investments and ambitious public works projects to create jobs. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's policies are already proving to be a magnet for migrants, who are finding it harder to enter the United States given President Trump's antipathy toward immigration. A migrant caravan heading to Mexico from Central America — the largest ever — has already swollen to over 12,000 people, with many saying they intend to remain in Mexico, at least for the time being.

The new Mexican president's generosity toward immigrants, officials say, dovetails with his broader commitment to protect human rights, reduce inequality and prioritize the poor.

Mr. López Obrador's pro-immigrant stance also serves as a dramatic counterpoint to the White House, without directly challenging Mr. Trump. But these policies could ultimately put pressure on the Mexico-United States border, as most in the caravan eventually hope to cross into the United States.



**A Honduran man in Tecun Uman, Guatemala, part of a caravan of Central American migrants, washed his clothes in the Suchiate River, which runs along the Guatemala-Mexico border. (Photo/Getty Images)**

Many in the caravan said they decided to migrate after a decision by the Mexican government to drastically speed up the process for securing a yearlong humanitarian visa that allows migrants to legally travel and work in Mexico. "The humanitarian visa that they're giving

now is the reason we are here," said Carlos del Valle, a Guatemalan teacher who was standing in line with his family this week to apply for the visa on the bridge connecting Guatemala with Mexico. "Later, if possible, we can get to the United States," he said.

Under the streamlined process, which began last week, the government is seeking to issue the humanitarian visa in an average of five days rather than a month. Migration officials said the policy would be permanent.



**Migrants from the caravan playing cards this month to pass the time in the Barretal shelter in Tijuana, Mexico. (Photo/The New York Times)**

The initiative, officials say, is part of the president's strategy to make Mexico's immigration policy more humane, after years of stepped-up deportations under pressure from the United States. But it could also draw even more migrants to trek north to the border with the United States, inflaming tensions with a Trump administration determined to build a border wall and lower immigration numbers.

On Thursday, the Trump administration said it would institute a new policy to return most asylum-seekers to Mexico if they had arrived at the southwest border by land. Under the policy, which is intended to discourage Central Americans from migrating to the United States and to ease pressure on the asylum system, the petitioners would be required to remain in Mexico while they await the outcome of their cases.

The Mexican government initially said it was speeding up the application process for humanitarian visas as an "exception" for the current migrant caravan only. But on Thursday, a spokeswoman with Mexico's national migration agency said the expedited process would be permanent. (Courtesy The New York Times)



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# 4部台灣電影 登陸北京電影節參展

第9屆北京國際電影節的交易市場展今天登場，台灣影界也同步抵達舉行電影推介會，共有「寒單」、「老大人」、「嗨！神獸」、「最是橙黃橘綠時」等4部本土電影準備藉由這次參展的機會，尋求登陸中國市場。

這場台灣電影推介會下午在北京國際飯店會議中心登場，共有「寒單」、「老大人」、「嗨！神獸」及「最是橙黃橘綠時」等4部電影參展。4片的製作、編導及演員紛紛上台亮相，向在場眾多兩岸媒體自我推薦。

在這4部電影中，描寫台灣廟會文化的「寒」片，先前一度被認為頗具賣相。但日前傳出，由於「寒」片中描寫的兄弟情，有被中國廣電總局大幅修剪、進而在過關上出現困難的可能，因此成為推介會上受關注的焦點。

「寒」片導演黃朝亮對此表示，雖然「寒」片描寫不少涉及兄弟的情節，且涉及社會邊緣方面「比較刺激」的內容，但電影講述的主軸仍是親情、友情跟愛情。在中國電影市場蓬勃發展且題材多元下，「寒」片仍適合當地觀眾的口味。

黃朝亮說，「寒」已經送交中國廣電總局審查，有信心能在8或9月上映。他也希望，自己執導的電影能扮演兩岸文化交流的角色。

在北京國際電影節活動中，都會同時舉行「北京國際電影交易市場展」，是各國電影利用影展機會洽談放映權的平台，而每年都有台灣電影在活動期間舉辦推介會，尋求機會登陸中國市場。



# 吳可熙「灼人秘密」奪優等劇本 自爆為這件事2周沒洗頭

吳可熙曾以「再見瓦城」入圍金馬影后，去年加入美國知名經紀團隊CAA，近期正在精進英語能力，透露今年可能會到美國發展。她演而優則編，與趙德胤導演的新片「灼人秘密」已到後製階段，15日她以該片代表出席優良電影劇本頒獎典禮，最終獲得優等劇本獎。

「灼人秘密」是一個探討影視圈的性騷擾事件，一連串恐怖、懸疑讓主角陷入噩夢，吳可熙

解釋，劇本不單講性侵，而是包含了女性自主權的意識，談起創作，她說：「我10幾年前當臨演時，因為表演老師的啟發，我開始紀錄一些周遭演員朋友發生的有趣故事。我一直都有在練習寫一些東西。真正開始寫完整劇本差不多是2015左右，第一個劇本是與『唱歌』有關的故事，『灼人秘密』其實是我寫的第2個劇本。」她也提到2017年完成初稿，當時卻發生me too事件，

因而得到許多靈感。

吳可熙表示創作過程非常非常孤獨，「因為每天都像瘋子一樣沉浸在我要寫的故事裡，身心都進入一種很特別的狀態。有時會半夜驚醒，在夢裡我想了一個很好的點，醒來後一個人很開心很興奮很驚喜。」她為了書寫，2周蓬頭垢面、沒洗頭，相當邋遢，只為了提高自己的寫作精力與時間，「我想把瑣碎生活事務降到最低。」

此外，在今天的典禮，一共有38件入圍作品角逐400萬元總獎金，除了「灼人秘密」奪得優等劇本獎，演員蘇達創作2周的劇本「山下無名」投了兩次也終於在本屆拿下獎，入圍的13部也包含柯貞年導演的「無聲之地」等等。

【10萬元優等劇本獎】：「橘子紅了」、「北緯23.5度」、「小藍」、「西瓜、蛋餅、失蹤少女」、「山下無名」、「山

與風之詩」、「無聲之地」、「姁文命之暗流四伏」、「第十二位太太」、「妖怪搬家」、「誰是影后」、「神將」、「灼人秘密」

【35萬元特優劇本獎】：「討債女王」、「第六天」、「心音」、「夏之橘」、「腿」、「孤味」

【60萬首獎】：「紅星孤旅」

# 吳慷仁海外速撈 750 萬 外國人也頭痛了

公視《我們與惡的距離》播出以來大受好評，在劇中飾演法扶律師的吳慷仁也備受關注，向來多產的他，日前接拍Netflix影集《彼岸之嫁》拿下1集新台幣100萬元酬勞，更傳他愛改劇本的習慣也開始國際化，讓團隊的人非常頭痛。

最近因為在公視《我們與惡的距離》中，飾演法扶律師形象大好、人氣很旺的吳慷仁，接下在馬來西亞拍攝的新劇《彼岸之嫁》，據悉酬勞一集高達新台幣100萬元，是他在台灣片酬的3倍，6集就賺進600萬元。由於製作群是國際規格，福利相當好，紮紮實實的週休二日，一星期開工五天、每天工作八小時，每個演員每天有新台幣2,000元零用金還包餐。

對於習慣苦幹實幹的台灣演員和劇組來說，參與《彼岸之嫁》拍攝簡直是天堂般的福利。不過福利歸福利，工作人員一碰到要求完美又愛改劇本的吳慷仁，立刻從天堂跌回現實。據悉吳慷仁拍攝期間對戲



非常投入，下戲多半是獨行俠，很少跟同劇演員交流。

吳慷仁向來對自己的戲及對白要求完美，他在台灣是戲

劇一哥，到馬來西亞拍戲也表現一哥的架勢，喜歡在劇本加入個人意見或更動對白。由於劇本往往是牽一髮動全身，對

於吳慷仁的愛改劇本，國際團隊人員也非常傻眼，但礙於他是男主角，為求拍戲和諧與早日完成，也只能盡量滿足一哥

要求。

Netflix華語原創影集《彼岸之嫁》共拍6集，製作陣容採雙導演，並仿美劇編劇團隊模式，由馬來西亞導演郭修篆、何宇恆共同執導，美籍裔編劇吳凱毓率領跨國編劇群參與，由吳慷仁、黃姵嘉、林路迪與田士廣領銜主演。

除此劇很受關注外，吳慷仁近期和蔡卓妍（阿Sa）合作香港電影《非分熟女》的大膽裸露演出，也成為話題，電影中他全程以廣東話演出，在台灣時就特別學廣東話，敬業認真沒話說。

近半年，吳慷仁荷包賺滿，除了台灣戲劇外，《非分熟女》片酬有新台幣150萬元，《彼岸之嫁》酬勞則有600萬元，單是海外收入已有750萬元，難怪他在拍攝期間一直在看房屋廣告。據悉他屬意新北市新店區的房子，在馬來西亞拍攝中途放假回台，也不停看屋，不過，目前仍未找到合適的新房。

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# 馬國明挺身護心穎：她知道做錯了

無線翡翠台原定繼《鐵探》後於5月13日晚上9時半時段播出由黃心穎主演的劇集《堅離地愛堅離地》，現改為播映由蕭嘉德監製，楊明、高海寧、湯洛雯等演出的《婚姻糾纏人》。此外，8點半檔劇集《開心速遞》的主題曲《在心中》由黃心穎主唱，“安心偷食”事件令心穎形象插水，不少網民要求無線更換主題曲，無線17日晚亦將心穎主唱的版本換成更換音樂版。





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