



Legislation Text

File #: RES 18-2095, **Version:** 2

Supporting legalization and decriminalization of recreational cannabis in Minnesota and expungement of Minnesotan records of convicted cannabis crimes.

WHEREAS, medical cannabis is legal in 33 states and recreational cannabis is legal in 10 states; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 Minnesota Legislation passed medical cannabis to treat seriously ill Minnesotans; and

WHEREAS, conditions treated by medical cannabis are cancer, HIV/AIDS, ALS, PTSD, autism, opioid addiction, and more; and

WHEREAS, a review of more than 10,000 cannabis studies in 2017 found that patients treated with cannabis and cannabinoids were more likely to feel a reduction in pain symptoms significantly, and evidence suggests that smoking cannabis does not increase risk of cancers often associated with tobacco products, such as lung, heart, and neck cancers; and

WHEREAS, there are 2,895 medical cannabis active patients in Saint Paul and thousands more across the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the medical cannabis program is extremely restrictive, due to an annual fee of \$200, and limited access to medical facilities and doctors; and

WHEREAS, recreational cannabis is still illegal in Minnesota; and

~~WHEREAS, a review of more than 10,000 cannabis study in 2017 found that patients treated with cannabis and cannabinoids were more likely to feel a reduction in pain symptoms significantly, and evidence suggests that smoking cannabis does not increase risk of cancers often associated with tobacco products, such as lung, heart, and neck cancers; and~~

WHEREAS, possession or sale of less than 42.5 grams of cannabis is a petty misdemeanor with a fine of \$200, and possession or sale of 42.5 grams and more is a felony with 5-30 years in jail and fine of \$10,000-\$1,000,000; and

WHEREAS, a Marist College Institute poll suggests that 52% of Americans, ages 18 and older, have tried recreational cannabis and 44% currently still uses it; and

WHEREAS, a 2010 survey from the Minnesota Department of Human Services showed that Blacks were approximately 1.8 times as likely to use cannabis as Whites; and

WHEREAS, people of color are continuously disproportionately criminalized; and, sentenced, and punished more harshly than White counterparts for the same offenses involving cannabis; and

WHEREAS, data from 2011 shows that the highest disparity in the State of Minnesota is in Ramsey County, where Blacks were 8.8 times more likely than Whites to be arrested for possession of cannabis; and

~~WHEREAS, possession or sale of less than 42.5 grams of cannabis is a petty misdemeanor with a fine of~~

~~\$200, and possession or sale of 42.5 grams and more is a felony with 5-30 years in jail and fine of \$10,000-\$1,000,000; and~~

~~WHEREAS, cannabis stings in 2018 in Hennepin County shows officers intentionally approaching black men to facilitate drug sales, 46 out of 47 arrested were Black, in contrast, the White person who was arrested initiated the drug deal; and, 46 out of 47 arrested were black and in contrast, the white person who was arrested when approached by the police to facilitate a drug deal; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota (ACLU of MN) reported that in 2010 the State of Minnesota spent as much as \$69 million dollars enforcing cannabis laws; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing recreational cannabis would provide increased safe and convenient access for patients and users; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing recreational cannabis would reduce inequitable criminalization of people of color; and~~

~~WHEREAS, decriminalizing recreational cannabis for Minnesotans, especially affected people of color, would open more opportunity for employment, housing, and other opportunities that become restricted with criminal records; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing cannabis would increase entrepreneur opportunities and tax base in Minnesota; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Saint Paul City Council recognizes the benefits and supports legalization of recreational cannabis for persons ages 21 and over; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Saint Paul recognizes the benefits of legalization of recreational cannabis, denounce criminalization of cannabis and targeting of people of color, and support the economic growth and health of Minnesotans; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Saint Paul City Council denounce criminalization of cannabis and targeting of people of color and support decriminalization by licensing and regulating cannabis production, distribution, possession, taxing cannabis sales, and removing state law criminal and civil penalties for such activities; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Saint Paul City Council support legalization of recreational cannabis for Minnesotans ages 21 and over; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing recreational cannabis would provide increased safe and convenient access for patients and users; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing recreational cannabis would reduce inequitable criminalization of people of color; and~~

~~WHEREAS, decriminalizing recreational cannabis for Minnesotans, especially affected people of color, would open more opportunity for employment, housing, and other opportunities that become restricted with criminal records; and~~

~~WHEREAS, legalizing cannabis would increase entrepreneur opportunities and tax base in Minnesota; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Saint Paul City Council supports the economic growth and health of Minnesotans by supporting an equitable amount of locally and people of color owned and operated cannabis businesses; and~~

~~THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council supports legalization and decriminalization of recreational cannabis and expungement of Minnesotan records of convicted cannabis crimes; and be it further~~

RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council supports and urges Minnesota House of Representatives, Minnesota Senate, and Governor Elect Tim Walz to legalize and decriminalize recreational cannabis and expunge Minnesotan records of convicted cannabis crimes as soon as possible; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul include the spirit of this resolution in its 2019 State Legislative Agenda.