

Wisconsin Cannabis Association: Applauds Gov Evers full legalization proposal

Posted on Monday, Feb 8, 2021

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Governor Evers Includes Full Legalization In 2021-23 Biennial Budget

The Wisconsin Cannabis Association applauds Governor Evers and his proposal for full legalization and statewide decriminalization of marijuana and urges the legislature to help bring important reform and economic development to Wisconsin. Not only would this end prohibition and grow Wisconsin businesses, but full legalization would generate an estimated \$165M annually in revenue to fund state services and infrastructure.

The Governor's proposal would tax and license marijuana through the Wisconsin Departments of Revenue and Agriculture, treating it like alcohol. This suggests a "Free State" model-like the one embraced in Michigan-that would open up the industry to small businesses, family farmers and communities impacted the most by prohibition.

Importantly, the proposal would decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana. Blacks in Wisconsin are arrested four times as frequently as whites despite similar rates of use. Marijuana convictions can create life-long roadblocks to education, employment and housing. In a system that disproportionately affects people of color, decriminalization is important social justice reform.

Legalization is not a partisan issue. Wisconsinites of all political persuasions living in rural, suburban and urban communities support legalization. In 2018, 16 counties

considered and passed advisory referenda supporting some form of legalization. Some of the strongest supporters of legalization are libertarians and those that argue freedom and individual choice matter the most.

Finally, action on marijuana legalization means jobs and revenue for Wisconsin. Other states have moved forward with full legalization and are benefiting. In less than one year of full legalization, Illinois has generated \$100 million in new revenue, with \$20 million generated in the month of September alone. 40,000 people in Colorado are licensed to work in the marijuana industry and the state has raised close to \$300M for investments in education and public infrastructure.