



MELISSA AGARD  
STATE SENATOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 30, 2021

Contact: Sidney Litke, 608-266-9170

**Medical Professionals Support Legalizing Cannabis**

*Cannabis prohibition further hurts racial disparities and poses issues for public health*

MADISON - Across the country, attitudes towards cannabis legalization are shifting, with less than 10% of American supporting the continued prohibition of cannabis. Health officials are looking at cannabis legalization as a way to address disparities in communities of color as well as in public health.

Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) and Dr. Angela Janis released the following statements:

**Senator Melissa Agard:**

"The most dangerous thing about cannabis is that it remains illegal. Cannabis prohibition harms communities across our state through over-policed and outdated drug policies.

"Cannabis prohibition is more than a social justice and economic issue - it is a public health issue. As the state with the worst racial disparities, this needs to be a top priority for our state to right past wrongs."

**Angela Janis, MD, DFAPA:**

"Cannabis criminalization laws are not effective and negatively impact public health. Arrests can have lifelong negative effects in one's ability to access housing, employment, and education. These impacts can be especially significant for people of color given the significant disparities in the enforcement of the laws. We need policies that start to address Wisconsin's significant health disparities, and cannabis legalization is one of the ways to achieve this." — Angela Janis, MD, DFAPA

###