

Republican Opposition Blocks NC Medical Cannabis Again

North Carolina Legislature Fails to Pass Medical Cannabis Bill for Third Year in a Row

For the third straight year, a proposal to legalize medical cannabis has failed in the North Carolina Legislature. Despite winning approval in the state Senate, the proposal was not called for a vote in the House of Representatives due to Republican opposition.

Republican Opposition

Republican state Representative Mark Pless voiced his opposition to the medical cannabis proposal, stating, “It is a gateway drug, which causes impairment as its primary function and results in addiction.” This sentiment contributed to the bill’s failure to advance.

Legislative Session Adjourned

The North Carolina General Assembly adjourned last week and is set to reconvene on July 10. However, it is unlikely that the medical marijuana bill will be considered when lawmakers return.

Proposal Details

The measure would have allowed state regulators to license up to 10 vertically integrated businesses, each permitted to operate up to eight retail dispensaries. The proposal aimed to establish a regulated market for medical cannabis in North Carolina.

Future Prospects

The topic of medical cannabis legalization is expected to resurface as a campaign issue and legislative proposal. The recent session highlighted some shifts in perspective among lawmakers. For example, Republican state Senator Warren Daniel, who previously opposed the bill, voted in favor of it this time. Daniel is up for reelection in a newly redrawn district, facing Democratic opponent John Ager, who supports allowing North Carolina farmers to grow cannabis.

Cannabis Availability on Tribal Land

While both medical and recreational cannabis remain illegal in North Carolina, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians has taken steps to provide access. The tribe launched adult-use sales on July 4 and medical marijuana sales on April 20 at the Great Smoky Cannabis Co. on its Qualla Boundary.

The failure of [North Carolina's medical cannabis proposal](#) for the third consecutive year underscores the ongoing debate and division among lawmakers. As the state Legislature prepares to reconvene, advocates and opponents of medical cannabis will continue to push their agendas, keeping the issue alive in both legislative and campaign discussions.

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