

Community Gains with Legal Cannabis in West Richland

West Richland Voters to Decide on Proposition 1 for Cannabis Sales

At the end of a long week, many people look forward to unwinding on a Friday night. Whether it's enjoying a glass of wine, a platter of nachos with a spiked seltzer, or a cold beer, these simple pleasures are often taken for granted. However, this experience is one that most people don't consider when discussing legal, adult-use cannabis — but perhaps they should.

Proposition 1 on the Ballot

On August 6, West Richland voters will decide on Proposition 1, an advisory measure to the city council regarding the sale of cannabis. If the council eventually agrees to raise taxes from cannabis sales, the revenue could help reduce the need for tax increases on essentials like gas and groceries.

Economic and Safety Benefits

Allowing retail cannabis stores would create jobs and help undermine the illegal market, which often deals in unsafe, untested drugs. A yes vote on Proposition 1 acknowledges that the current local ban does not create a cannabis-free zone but instead empowers an illegal and unsafe cannabis monopoly.

Respecting Adult Choices

Voting yes respects the decision-making ability of adults aged 21 and over, allowing them to make their own choices within a regulated, safe, and quality-controlled cannabis marketplace.

A Decade of Regulation

Ten years into Washington state's regulated cannabis sector, millions of residents and visitors have experienced safe, tested products in a marketplace that curtails youth access. Despite this, the illicit market remains a concern that must be addressed transparently.

Clear Labeling and Quality Control

Certified labs provide clear labeling on dosage and quality-control, ensuring that adult consumers can make safe choices. Cannabis businesses are prohibited from operating within 1,000 feet of schools, parks, churches, and daycares.

Decrease in Youth Usage

The 2023 Washington Healthy Youth Survey reported a 56-65% decrease in cannabis usage among high school students in Benton County since 2012, reflecting a statewide trend.

Addressing Illicit Drug Use

Illicit drug use continues to pose a public health crisis. However, unregulated cannabis products from illegal sources have no more in common with regulated cannabis than moonshine does with locally produced wine.

Economic Opportunities

A yes vote on Proposition 1 would enable the city council to collect sales tax on cannabis, potentially raising up to \$160,000 annually. This revenue could offset taxes that burden everyone.

Job Creation

The state's cannabis industry employs more than 18,000 workers statewide, and some of those jobs could be created in West Richland.

Regulatory Compliance

The Washington Liquor and Cannabis Board, the state's primary cannabis regulator, has found that the retail store compliance rate for blocking youth access is 95%, surpassing both alcohol and tobacco sectors.

Overcoming Fear and Misinformation

Overcoming nearly a century of fear and misinformation about cannabis was never going to be easy. However, the industry has demonstrated regulatory compliance and community commitment expected from any legal business.

Civic Participation

Cannabis businesses regularly join chambers of commerce and sponsor local events, showing civic participation that is respected in any community.

West Richland voters have the opportunity to vote in favor of economic opportunity and safety over fear and ignorance. A yes vote on Proposition 1 would support the creation of jobs, generate significant tax revenue, and help regulate cannabis sales to ensure safety and compliance. Consider voting YES on Proposition 1 to bring these benefits to the community.

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