

Trump Signals Support for Florida Cannabis Legalization

Trump Signals Support for Cannabis Legalization in Florida, Clashing with DeSantis

In a surprising move, former President Donald Trump has signaled his support for the legalization of marijuana for personal use in Florida, setting the stage for a potential clash with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Trump's endorsement comes ahead of a November ballot where Florida voters will decide on the issue.

Trump's Stance on Cannabis Legalization

Taking to his Truth Social platform, Trump expressed confidence that the measure to legalize marijuana in Florida will likely pass, stating that it should be implemented correctly if it is going to happen. "Voters are highly likely to approve the measure whether people like it or not," Trump wrote, adding, "It should be done correctly."

This position marks a significant divergence from other senior Republican figures, most notably Governor DeSantis, who has been vocal in his opposition to legalizing recreational cannabis. DeSantis has argued that such a move would negatively impact the quality of life in the state, warning that it could transform Florida into cities like San Francisco or Chicago, where marijuana is legal.

A Broader National Context

Trump's support for legalization in Florida reflects a growing trend across the United States. According to the Pew Research Center, cannabis for both personal and medical use is now legal in 24 states, with an additional 14 states having legalized medical marijuana. Florida itself legalized medicinal marijuana in 2016, and the current proposal would expand legal cannabis use to include recreational purposes.

In his comments, Trump argued against criminalizing marijuana users, pointing out the inconsistency in laws across states. "Someone should not be a criminal in Florida when this is legal in so many other states," he said. "We do not need to ruin lives and waste taxpayer dollars arresting adults with personal amounts of it on them."

However, Trump also emphasized the need for regulations, particularly in public spaces. He suggested that any legalization effort should include rules to "prohibit the use of it in public spaces, so we do not smell marijuana everywhere we go, like we do in many of the Democrat-run cities."

DeSantis' Opposition and Concerns

Governor DeSantis remains firmly opposed to the idea of legalizing marijuana for recreational use in Florida. He has warned that such a move would lead to adverse consequences, comparing the potential outcome to

cities in states like California and Illinois, where marijuana is already legal.

In Illinois, where [recreational cannabis](#) was legalized in 2020, cannabis sales exceeded \$1 billion between January and July of this year. Similarly, in California, where personal use was legalized in 2016, marijuana sales reached \$4.4 billion in 2023. Despite these numbers, there is ongoing debate about the impact of legalization on the black market, which some argue still thrives despite the legal options available.

“The black market is very pervasive and it is definitely larger than the legal market,” Bill Jones, head of enforcement for California’s Department of Cannabis Control, told NPR earlier this year. This concern adds another layer to the debate in Florida as voters consider the implications of legalization.

Trump’s Position on Other Ballot Issues

Trump’s stance on marijuana is not the only issue drawing attention in the lead-up to the November ballot. He recently caused confusion regarding his position on a proposed amendment to protect abortion rights in Florida. Initially, Trump signaled support for expanding abortion rights to 24 weeks, but after facing backlash from conservative supporters, he reversed his stance, stating he would vote against the measure.

Abortion is currently banned in Florida after six weeks of pregnancy. The proposed amendment seeks to extend this period to 24 weeks, a significant change that has sparked intense debate. Trump’s initial comments suggested he thought the six-week period was “too short,” but he later clarified his opposition to the amendment.

As Trump campaigns for another term in the White House, his positions on these key issues will be closely scrutinized, particularly in his home state of Florida. The outcome of the November ballot could have far-reaching implications, both for the state and for Trump’s political future.

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