

New Hampshire Plans 2025 Cannabis and Psychedelics Legislation

New Hampshire Lawmakers Prepare for Cannabis-Related Legislation in Upcoming Session

Following an intense legislative session in New Hampshire earlier this year, which nearly saw the state legalize recreational marijuana, lawmakers are already setting the stage for cannabis-related bills in the upcoming session. Despite falling short of legalization, the momentum for cannabis reform continues as several members of the New Hampshire House of Representatives have requested new marijuana legislation to be drafted ahead of next year's session.

According to legislative service requests, six separate pieces of marijuana-related legislation have been proposed, with an additional measure focused on psilocybin. The new efforts signal that the debate over cannabis legalization is far from over.

Push for Cannabis Legalization Continues

Of the six proposed bills, three focus on legalizing marijuana. [Representative Jared Sullivan \(D\)](#) and [Representative Kevin Verville \(R\)](#) have each submitted requests for bills aimed at legalizing cannabis for adults aged 21 and older. While Verville's request is straightforward in seeking to legalize cannabis for adult use, Sullivan's proposals take a more nuanced approach. One of his bills aims to legalize personal use while establishing penalties for public smoking or vaping and creating a commission to study cannabis regulation and sales.

The other bill from Sullivan would go a step further by introducing regulations around legal sales and making appropriations to fund the initiative.

Psilocybin and Cannabis Expungement Measures on the Horizon

In addition to cannabis, Representative Verville has also requested legislation that would legalize the possession and use of psilocybin for adults aged 21 and older, highlighting a growing interest in psychedelic reform alongside cannabis legislation.

Meanwhile, Representative Jonah Wheeler (D) has introduced a request for a bill that would address past cannabis offenses, focusing on annulling, resentencing, or discontinuing prosecutions for certain marijuana-related crimes. While it is unclear if Wheeler's proposal will include broader decriminalization, the move reflects growing efforts to address the consequences of past cannabis criminalization.

Medical Cannabis Reforms Set for the 2024 Session

On the medical marijuana front, Representative Wendy Thomas (D) is championing further reforms. Thomas, who successfully pushed for the expansion of the state's medical marijuana program earlier this year, has submitted two more bills for the upcoming session.

One bill would allow qualifying patients and caregivers to grow cannabis at home, addressing the current lack of home cultivation allowances in New Hampshire's medical program. The other bill seeks to refine the definition of cannabis in the state's therapeutic cannabis program and regulate hemp-derived cannabinoids.

The Roadblocks and Support for Legalization

Despite two-thirds of New Hampshire residents supporting marijuana legalization, lawmakers have struggled to reach a consensus on how to move forward. Earlier this year, the House worked extensively on a Republican-led bill that would have legalized cannabis through a system of state-run franchise stores. However, the bill was tabled at the last minute, with some House Democrats calling it a flawed proposal designed to meet Governor Chris Sununu's approval.

Polling from earlier this year showed that 61% of New Hampshire residents supported the bill, but divisions among lawmakers halted progress. With Sununu not seeking re-election, the outcome of the November elections could significantly impact the future of cannabis reform in the state.

Election Impact on Cannabis Policy

As New Hampshire prepares for the November election, the gubernatorial race could shift the state's approach to marijuana legalization. On the Democratic side, former Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig has voiced her support for cannabis legalization, advocating for a structure that benefits small businesses rather than the state-controlled franchise system proposed earlier this year. Craig has emphasized the need for New Hampshire to establish its own cannabis market before federal reforms open interstate commerce.

On the Republican side, Kelly Ayotte, a former U.S. senator and state attorney general, has taken a firm stance against legalization. Ayotte has stated that she opposes recreational marijuana and believes it is not the right direction for the state.

The outcome of the gubernatorial race and the election of new lawmakers will likely shape the future of cannabis policy in New Hampshire. Representative Thomas has noted that the legislative requests filed now offer a glimpse into lawmakers' priorities, but additional bills could be introduced after the election based on the new political landscape.

Minor Cannabis Reforms Move Forward

While the broader push for legalization stalled, Governor Sununu has approved several smaller marijuana reforms this year, including bills expanding access to medical marijuana. One notable bill, introduced by Representative Thomas, allowed doctors to recommend cannabis for any debilitating condition that could benefit from treatment, eliminating the need for patients to be diagnosed with specific conditions. Other reforms include adding generalized anxiety disorder as a qualifying condition and expanding the number of healthcare providers authorized to certify patients for the medical program.

However, Sununu vetoed a bill that would have allowed medical marijuana businesses to open second cultivation locations, including greenhouses. Under current law, medical marijuana must be grown in secure indoor locations. In his veto statement, Sununu cited concerns about the lack of detail regarding safety and security measures for these new cultivation sites.

Looking Ahead: Will 2024 Bring Legalization?

As New Hampshire lawmakers gear up for the 2024 session, the push for cannabis legalization is likely to be a top priority. With several marijuana bills already in the works and public support for reform remaining strong, advocates are hopeful that the state can finally pass comprehensive cannabis legislation. The outcome of the November elections will play a critical role in shaping the future of cannabis in New Hampshire, as new leadership and lawmakers could bring fresh perspectives and momentum to the issue.

For now, the path forward remains uncertain, but the growing number of cannabis-related legislative proposals signals that the conversation is far from over.

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