

Breaking Ground: Colorado Governor Identifies Cannabis Rescheduling and Banking Reform as Key Steps Towards Federal Legalization

During a keynote address at a National Cannabis Industry Association (NCIA) gathering in Denver, Governor Jared Polis emphasized the importance of incremental steps towards federal marijuana legalization. He described rescheduling cannabis and reforming banking regulations as pivotal “dominoes” that could facilitate broader legislative change. Polis underscored ongoing discussions between Colorado and the White House, stressing the necessity of policy reform.

Reflecting on Colorado’s decade-long journey since legalizing cannabis, Polis highlighted the state’s commitment to equity within the industry. He announced the launch of a pilot program, “Access to Experts,” through the state’s Cannabis Business Office (CBO), aimed at supporting social equity marijuana businesses with technical assistance and compliance guidance.

Polis reiterated his advocacy for federal action on marijuana reclassification and emphasized the need for banking reform to alleviate burdens on cannabis businesses. He revealed his collaborative efforts with other governors to push for federal action.

Addressing concerns about the impact of legalization on tourism, Polis affirmed Colorado’s commitment to leadership in cannabis regulation despite changes in market dynamics. He celebrated the state’s regulatory achievements and economic benefits, noting over \$15 billion in legal marijuana sales since inception.

Polis highlighted Colorado’s successful regulatory framework, including stringent youth access restrictions, evidenced by a 99 percent compliance rate in ID verification at cannabis businesses. He emphasized the state’s role as a trailblazer in cannabis policy, inspiring similar regulatory models nationwide and globally.

The governor’s remarks underscored Colorado’s continued leadership in cannabis reform and its commitment to inclusive, responsible industry growth.

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