

# Vermont Moves Closer to Psychedelics Reform: Senate Approval Paves Way for House Consideration

A bill in Vermont seeking to establish a task force on psychedelic-assisted therapy has moved forward in the House, with lawmakers making adjustments to its scope.

## Focus on Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy

The bill aims to create a working group to examine the potential benefits and risks of clinical psychedelic treatments for mental health.

## Scope Narrowed in House Committee

Before advancing the measure, the House Human Services Committee refined its language, stripping provisions related to the reconsideration of psychedelic criminalization and universal access timelines.

## Emphasis on Research and Evidence

The eight-person task force would assess the latest scientific research on psychedelic therapy and review laws and programs in other states.

## Committee's Rationale for Changes

Rep. Anne Donahue emphasized the need for caution and careful consideration, expressing concerns about the presumptions in the original Senate-passed bill.

## Stakeholder Representation Adjusted

The committee removed representatives from the Psychedelic Society of Vermont and a psychiatric hospital, instead adding members from the Department of Mental Health and the Vermont Medical Society.

## Advocacy and Skepticism

Advocates like psychiatrist Rick Barnett voiced support for the bill, citing the growing interest in psychedelic therapy. However, skepticism remains, with Donahue highlighting her personal experiences with mental health care.

## State and Federal Developments

Vermont joins a wave of states exploring psychedelics legislation, with recent actions ranging from task force creation to pilot programs and clinical research funding.

## National Context and FDA Review

At the federal level, the FDA's consideration of MDMA-assisted therapy and VA research initiatives signal evolving attitudes toward psychedelics in the medical community.

### **Congress's Role**

In Congress, discussions on psychedelics extend to veterans' health care, with proposed legislation seeking increased transparency from the VA on psychedelic drug inclusion in its formulary.

As Vermont and other states navigate the complexities of psychedelics policy, the conversation continues to evolve at both the state and federal levels, reflecting a growing recognition of the therapeutic potential of these substances.

Email: [info@cannabisriskmanager.com](mailto:info@cannabisriskmanager.com) | Phone: +415-226-4060

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