

# Ohio's Preemptive Measures: 47 Communities Opt Out of Recreational Cannabis Businesses

In a proactive move, forty-seven Ohio communities have implemented moratoriums banning recreational marijuana businesses within their jurisdictions, a recent report by Laura Hancock reveals. Interestingly, this trend aligns with the findings of new research from OSU, indicating that most of these communities had also prohibited medical marijuana businesses previously. The passing of the recreational marijuana law by state voters in November established a framework for local governments to veto marijuana licenses within their areas if they opt against cannabis ventures. Moreover, it introduced a referendum process empowering the public to challenge municipal decisions.

## Masked Protests and Legal Loopholes

A recent attempt by police to employ a century-old state law against pro-Palestinian protesters, who were wearing masks during a demonstration, faced a setback, as reported by Andrew Tobias. Despite a felony charge filed by Xavier University police under the antiquated law, a grand jury in Hamilton County dismissed the charge due to discrepancies in the application of the law's criteria. This development brings attention to the complexities surrounding legal interpretations and the challenges in enforcing outdated statutes in contemporary contexts.

## Supporting Children's Nutrition

Jeremy Pelzer highlights a new federal initiative set to launch in Ohio and 35 other states this summer – the Summer EBT program. Designed to aid low-income families with children aged 6 to 18, the program offers one-time payments of \$120 to help cover groceries during the months when schools do not provide free or reduced-price meals. With over \$102 million in federal funds allocated for Summer EBT benefits, and additional support for administrative costs, the program aims to address food insecurity among vulnerable populations.

## Advocating for Environmental Compliance

U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and JD Vance advocate for a comprehensive approach to Clean Water Act compliance in Ohio communities, as detailed by Sabrina Eaton. Emphasizing the financial constraints faced by municipalities, they urge the EPA to engage with communities to ensure a holistic assessment of financial capacity for compliance. This call for cooperation underscores the importance of balancing environmental mandates with the economic realities of local governments.

## Legislative Push for Contraception Rights

Three Ohio Democratic Congress members push for the approval of "Right to Contraception" legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives, reports highlight. This legislation, previously passed in 2022, seeks to establish federal protections for individuals' access to contraception and related information. Amidst ongoing

debates surrounding reproductive rights, these lawmakers advocate for the prioritization of constituents' healthcare needs.

## **Bipartisan Efforts in Congress**

U.S. Representatives Dave Joyce and Haley Stevens introduce the “Stop Nurse Shortages Act,” a bipartisan endeavor aimed at alleviating the nationwide nursing workforce shortage. The proposed legislation includes a grant program to support nursing schools in expanding or establishing accelerated nursing degree programs. With bipartisan support, lawmakers emphasize the urgency of addressing critical gaps in healthcare staffing to ensure quality patient care nationwide.

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