

Senate Bill 7 – Legalization of Adult Use Marijuana

Pennsylvania Voters Strongly Support Legalizing Marijuana—And They Blame Republicans For Blocking Progress, New Poll Shows

<https://www.marijuanamoment.net/pennsylvania-voters-strongly-support-legalizing-marijuana-and-they-blame-republicans-for-blocking-progress-new-poll-shows/>

By: Tom Angell

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A new poll shows that Pennsylvania voters overwhelmingly support marijuana legalization—and that the largest share put the blame on Republican lawmakers for the fact that the state has not yet enacted the reform.

The survey, conducted by Public Policy Polling this month, found that three out of four voters favor legalizing recreational cannabis. When asked whether “adults over 21 should have places to purchase non-medical cannabis products that are legal, and strictly regulated,” 55 percent said they strongly agree and 20 percent somewhat agree.

Only 16 percent strongly disagree and 7 percent somewhat disagree, with another 3 percent saying they are unsure.

Cannabis Use Soars Among Older Adults

When asked in a separate question whether Pennsylvania should keep the illicit market status quo, or if the state should legalize, regulate and tax non-medical use of cannabis by adults, 68 percent favored reform while just 14 percent said the laws should remain the same.

The poll also informed voters that:

“In the past 4 years the Pennsylvania Senate has had a bipartisan bill that would legalize and regulate the sale of adult use cannabis products. A similar bipartisan measure has been introduced in the House. In that same time period, the last two Governors have endorsed the passage of adult use cannabis legislation, yet it has yet to pass.”

“Who do you believe is the biggest obstacle when it comes to passing adult use cannabis legislation: the Governor, Democrats in the State Legislature, or Republicans in the State Legislature?” it asked.

Forty percent of respondents blamed GOP lawmakers, 12 percent blamed Democrats and 9 percent said the governor was to blame for the lack of progress.

The poll results come as a Republican senator is blaming the state’s Democratic governor for the defeat this month of his bill to create a new Cannabis Control Board (CCB) to oversee the state’s medical marijuana program and intoxicating hemp products and that could also one day oversee recreational cannabis if it is legalized.

Most GOP senators in the Republican-controlled chamber voted for the legislation from Sen. Dan Laughlin (R), and all but two Democrats opposed it—with even some lawmakers who signed onto the measure as cosponsors ultimately voting against it.

Gov. Josh Shapiro (D) “obviously weighed in on the Democratic side of the aisle and asked for a ‘no’ vote over there, successfully,” Sen. Dan Laughlin (R) said after the vote. “I knew it was a risk putting it up for a vote, because there were some discussions going back and forth... I had a little bit of a heads-up, but we chose to roll forward.”

The governor’s office confirmed in a statement that he opposes the bill as drafted.

“The Shapiro Administration remains supportive of comprehensive cannabis regulation, which would enable a competitive, revenue-generating adult-use market, protect patient access to the current Medical Marijuana Program and rein in hemp-based intoxicant products that are currently unregulated,” Rosie Lapowsky, a spokesperson for the governor, said. “Senate Bill 49 does not substantively advance those goals.”

The now-defeated measure would transfer regulatory authority for the state’s existing medical cannabis program from the Department of Health to a new seven-member CCB.

The governor would appoint three members—one with law enforcement experience, another with expertise in dealing with addiction and a third with experience in “cannabis matters.” The Senate president pro tempore, Senate minority leader, House speaker and House minority leader would also each get to make one appointment.

The body would oversee cannabis permits, enforcement, seed-to-sale tracking, advertising, labeling, testing and other aspects of the legal industry.

Moments after the bill’s defeat on the Senate floor, the chamber adopted a motion to reconsider—but it’s not yet clear when or if the legislation will get another vote.

The bill would also create new types of medical cannabis permits for warehousing/distribution and third-party transporters, and would require regulars to issue an additional permit to an independent grower/processor.

It would additionally add a new requirement for dispensaries to have a physician, pharmacist, physician assistant or certified nurse practitioner available at all times during hours of operation.

A new Cannabis Regulation Fund would be established, supported by fees from the program. Forty percent of revenue would fund CCB’s operations, 15 percent would help patients pay for medical marijuana, 10 percent would support drug misuse prevention and treatment, 10 percent would go to local police departments and the remainder would go into the state’s general fund.

Laughlin’s legislation would also significantly restrict most hemp THC products, aligning the state with a new federal policy that is set to take effect later this year recriminalizing preparations with total THC content of more than 0.3 percent on a dry-weight basis or more than 0.4 milligrams of THC per container.

To the end, the new Pennsylvania poll also asked about the availability of intoxicating cannabinoid products, with 84 percent either strongly or somewhat agreeing that the state should enact a law to prevent their sales to minors and 85 percent favoring sales only at “strictly regulated, age-restricted storefronts.”

The new survey involved interviews with 589 Pennsylvania voters on June 16 and 17.

Laughlin, who is also sponsoring bipartisan legislation to legalize adult-use marijuana previewed the now-defeated regulatory measure last year, saying that Pennsylvania should take initial steps to make sure the state is “ready to act when legalization becomes law” by establishing a CCB now.

In a cosponsorship memo, Laughlin wrote that his bill would “transfer regulatory control of the Medical Marijuana Program to the CCB, ensuring continuity, efficiency, and improved oversight of medical cannabis businesses and patient access.” It would further “establish uniform safety standards to protect consumers from untested and potentially harmful products.”

The bill text itself would not enact recreational marijuana legalization on its own. But the description indicates that the sponsor feels the current regulatory regime under the Pennsylvania Department of Health should be replaced with a more targeted agency that would ostensibly be suited to oversee an adult-use market if lawmakers move to end prohibition.

“By consolidating oversight under a single regulatory board, we can eliminate inconsistencies, enhance transparency, and provide the structure needed to responsibly manage this industry,” the memo says.

The action on the cannabis regulatory bill, SB 49, came shortly after the House of Representatives passed a bill to allow terminally ill patients to use medical cannabis in hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

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More States Are Rejecting the Harm of Marijuana Legalization

<https://pafamily.org/2025/03/07/rejecting-marijuana-legalization/>

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Across the country, communities are proving that when enough people take a stand, marijuana legalization can be stopped. Time and again, states have rejected efforts to legalize recreational weed—whether through legislative defeats or voter decisions at the ballot box. Legalization doesn’t just happen; it moves forward only when citizens and leaders fail to push back. But when people show up, stand up to falsehoods and respond with the truth about marijuana’s harms, stopping legalization is not just possible—it’s imperative. Considering the damage it causes, it must be stopped!

The Power of Vigilant Opposition

Marijuana industry lobbyists and advocates may push the false narrative that legalization is coming to every state, but the facts tell a different story. Communities that organize, educate, and take action have successfully blocked legalization efforts time and again. Legislators have listened. Voters have rejected ballot measures. Leaders have stood firm. States are proving that when citizens raise their voices and share the truth, legalization can—and will—be defeated.

States That Have Successfully Blocked Legal Weed

Despite the well-funded propaganda efforts, the long-term harms, adverse impacts, and costs of high-potency THC is well established. Many states have demonstrated that rejecting marijuana legalization is possible when community and church leaders, and citizens take a stand:

New Hampshire – Despite pressure from surrounding states that have legalized marijuana, New Hampshire’s legislature has consistently rejected it. In 2023, the state House passed a bill to legalize it, but the Senate refused to move forward, stopping legalization in its tracks. Governor Chris Sununu has also expressed skepticism about the policy, helping to keep New Hampshire from following the crowd.

Nebraska – While Nebraska voters approved medical marijuana in 2024, efforts to legalize recreational marijuana have repeatedly failed in the state legislature. Nebraska’s conservative leadership has consistently opposed broader marijuana reforms, proving that strong political opposition can prevent legalization from moving forward.

Florida, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma – These states have all rejected marijuana legalization at the ballot box. In 2024, voters in Florida, North Dakota, and South Dakota rejected recreational marijuana ballot measures, showing that even when legalization is put directly to the people, it does not always succeed. Oklahoma voters also rejected a ballot initiative in 2023.

Legalization Will Harm Everyone, Not Just Marijuana Users

Proponents of marijuana legalization, like Gov. Shapiro, want the conversation to focus on tax revenue from those that consume it. The goal is to divert attention from the real issue that affects everyone:

public safety. Politicians like to talk about intent, but citizens and legislators should be concerned about outcomes. And in this, the data is absolutely clear that the negative consequences of legalization far outweighs any claimed benefits. Elected leaders must hear from citizens on the need to focus on protecting everyday Pennsylvanians from harm. Scott Bohn, executive director of the PA Chiefs of Police Association, highlights this critical flaw in the debate, stating, “There’s just so many issues, and the only thing we’re talking about is money.”

The reality and consequences for states that have experimented with recreational marijuana is clear: legalization leads to greater public safety risks, including increased rates of intoxicated driving and marijuana DUIs. If Pennsylvania lawmakers choose to commercialize high-potency THC for retail sale, the consequences will extend far beyond those who choose to use marijuana. Increased marijuana consumption, particularly among adolescents, will lead to more health risks, and with no reliable in-field breathalyzer test to detect marijuana impairment, law enforcement will face even greater challenges in keeping roads and communities safe.

So let’s speak up and make sure this is a debate over public safety that affects all Pennsylvanians, regardless of whether they use marijuana or not. The truth is, when citizens reject the misleading financial arguments and focus on the real harms and risks, rejecting legalization is inevitable.

What Can You Do to Stop Legalization?

Despite pressure from the industry, not one vote has happened thus far on this type of harmful expansion. That goes to show legislators are not sold on the lie yet. It’s proof that when people show up, stand up, and speak up, we can make a difference and influence our elected state officials.

Show up to vote – Many pro-marijuana efforts succeed simply because too many people stay home. Elections matter, and voting for candidates who oppose legalization can make all the difference.

Stand up to the lies – The marijuana industry makes billions by downplaying the harms of their product. They claim that legal weed is harmless and that it will bring in massive tax revenue. The reality? States experimenting with marijuana for recreational use see increased addiction rates, negative impacts on mental health, higher rates of impaired driving, workplace safety and shortage of eligible workers, and significant black-market activity that undermines any supposed economic benefits.

Speak up and share the truth – People need to hear the facts about marijuana’s harms. Whether it’s talking to friends and family, writing letters to legislators, or attending local meetings, spreading the truth can turn the tide. There are legislators who may be on the fence about marijuana policy and need to hear from concerned citizens before making important policy decisions.

A Powerful Tool to Share the Truth

To make it easier for people to share informative, fact-based resources about the dangers of marijuana, PA Family has created an online resource at TruthOnWeed.com to help you be a voice against this evil among your friends and family. This website provides well-designed social media graphics that can be easily shared on personal and church social media accounts to help educate others.

Social media platforms have an incredible reach, and when the message comes from trusted community leaders and family members like you, it can have a strong influencing impact on advocating against legalization of marijuana. Don't underestimate the influence of your voice.

The site also includes one-pagers that answer common questions about marijuana, including:

Is Marijuana Addictive?

Is Marijuana Dangerous?

What Health Organizations Say

Fiscal Consequences

Kushy Punch: An Example of Today's Marijuana

By visiting the "Take Action" page on the site, readers can find simple, effective ways to share the truth and push back against the false narratives surrounding marijuana legalization.

Keep Up The Fight The industry-funded movement to increase marijuana use in our communities is strong, but it is not unstoppable. Marijuana legalization for recreational use is not a done deal. It can be stopped—but only if enough good people show up, stand up, and speak up. Will you be one of them? As the examples above show, states have successfully rejected legal weed when enough people take action. Every voice matters. Every vote counts. Every effort to share the truth helps push back against the false narrative of inevitability.