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POLITICS

California Activists File Psilocybin Legalization Ballot Measure As Legislature Advances Broader Psychedelics Bill



Published 3 months ago on July 15, 2021
By Kyle Jaeger



California psychedelics activists are embarking on a bold journey, filing a petition for the 2022 ballot to make the state the first in the nation to legalize psilocybin mushrooms for any use.




The measure—titled the California Psilocybin Initiative—would legalize the “personal, medical, therapeutic, religious, spiritual, and dietary use of Psilocybin Mushrooms” for adults 21 and older.

Further, the initiative would allow for the cultivation, retail sale, social sharing and on-site consumption of the psychedelic.

There would be no limits on personal possession—a policy that has stirred controversy in the state legislature over [separate legislation to legalize possession of a wide range of psychedelics](#) that has already passed the Senate but which in its most recent Assembly committee consideration had certain limits added in an effort to build support.

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Activists with Decriminalize California submitted the petition to the state attorney general's office on Monday. That initiated a 30-day public comment period that will last until August 11. If the office accepts the measure and assigns it a title and summary, the group will need to collect 623,212 valid signatures from registered voters within 180 days.



Decriminalize California
about 3 months ago

On Monday July 12th, 2021 we submitted the California Psilocybin Initiative v 4.6 to the Office of the Attorney General with a cashiers check of \$2,000 to trigger the 30 day public comment period that will close August 11th.

If all goes well and society isn't shut down from another round of the plague, murder hornets, or an alien invasion(my personal favorite) then we should begin collecting signatures starting in early September of this year.

We will then have 180 days to co... [See More](#)

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While this proposal goes further than the [psilocybin measure that Oregon voters approved last year](#), which made it legal for therapeutic use in a clinically supervised setting, it does still have a specific medical component.

Healthcare professionals “may recommend Psilocybin or Psilocybin Mushrooms for use in minors and adults under the age of 21, for the treatment of specific and appropriate indications,” it says.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the program overall. Meanwhile the state Department of Consumer Affairs and the Health and Human Services Agency would be required to “adopt and implement the qualification requirements and protocols for Psilocybin Mushroom-assisted therapy created by an independent professional certifying body. ”

Activists made a concerted effort in the measure to ensure the psilocybin products are generally treated like other legal commodities. For example, the products would not be subject to any licensing requirements, fees or taxes that “exceed the amount charged or assessed for comparable non-Psilocybin Mushroom related businesses.”

Psilocybin that’s sold for “medical, therapeutic, religious or spiritual purposes” wouldn’t be subject to any sales or excise tax at all. Those that are marketed as dietary supplements would be taxed “at the local sales tax rate at the point of sale.”

“Psilocybin Mushrooms and Psilocybin Mushroom Businesses shall be regulated as closely as practicable to non-psychoactive agriculturally produced mushrooms” except for specific labelling requirements, the measure says. The labels must include a universal symbol and a warning statement advising consumers to keep them out of reach of children and advising

about impairment. Packaging must also explain the content of product, including milligrams of active ingredients per package and per serving.

Researchers, healthcare professionals and therapists would have specific protections related to psilocybin that are carved into the initiative. The psychedelic also couldn't be used as the sole basis to revoke parental rights.

“Starting January 1, 2023, any Psilocybin Mushroom Business operating on land that is zoned for commercial agricultural production and approved by the COPA for food production can begin the cultivation, manufacturing, and wholesale distribution of Psilocybin Mushrooms,” the measure states. “Starting April 19, 2023, any business that is incorporated in California and possesses a California Seller’s Permit can begin retail sales.”

Local jurisdictions would be able to ban or limit psilocybin businesses from operating in their area if voters approve the restriction via citizen initiative or a petition submitted by a governing body.

Except for safety-sensitive positions “no person shall refuse to provide services or benefits or increase the charge for services or benefits, based on the lawful use, cultivation, possession, storage, or sales of Psilocybin Mushrooms,” it says.

“The purpose of this act is to implement a comprehensive, statewide scheme authorizing and regulating the cultivation, processing, and distribution of Psilocybin Mushrooms and the chemical compounds contained therein for personal, medical, therapeutic, spiritual, religious, and dietary use,” Ryan Munevar, campaign director of Decriminalize California, [said](#) in an email blast to supporters.

He added: “If all goes well and society isn’t shut down from another round of the plague, murder hornets, or an alien invasion (my personal favorite) then we should begin collecting signatures starting in early September of this year.”

Decriminalize California previously said that it would first work to convince lawmakers to pursue reform and then take the issue directly to the people if the legislature failed to act.

It’s not clear if the group has lost faith in a Senate-passed psychedelics decriminalization bill sponsored by Sen. Scott Wiener (D) that advanced through its second Assembly committee this week or if it simply wishes to pursue a different route, legalizing psilocybin alone and allowing for its commercial sale.

The group attempted to [get a similar measure on the November 2020 ballot](#), but they faced signature gathering complications due to the coronavirus pandemic and ultimately abandoned that effort.

“Historically what we have already done is the truest most sincere form of open source politics and brings us one step closer to a proper direct democracy by electronic debate,” Munevar said.

Activists are also stepping up the push to enact psychedelics reform locally in other cities in the state and across the country.

The Northampton, Massachusetts City Council [passed a resolution](#) in April to deprioritize enforcement of laws against the possession, use and distribution of a wide range of psychedelics such as psilocybin and ayahuasca. It’s the third city in the state to advance the policy change, following [Somerville](#) and [Cambridge](#).

These are some of the latest iterations of a national psychedelics reform movement that’s spread rapidly since [Denver became the first city to decriminalize psilocybin mushrooms](#) in 2019.

Besides the cities in Massachusetts, four others—[Oakland](#), [Santa Cruz](#), [Ann Arbor](#) and [Washington, D.C.](#)—have also decriminalized possession of plant-and fungi-based psychedelics.

An [Arcata, California](#) councilmember announced this month that she would sponsor a measure to decriminalize psychedelics

In Oregon, November’s election saw the passage of a historic initiatives to [legalize psilocybin mushrooms for therapeutic purposes](#) and more broadly [decriminalize possession of all drugs](#).

The governor of Connecticut signed legislation recently that includes language requiring the state to carry out a [study into the therapeutic potential of psilocybin mushrooms](#).

Texas also recently enacted a bill to require the state [study the medical benefits of psychedelics for military veterans](#).

A New York lawmaker introduced a bill last month that would require the state to establish an institute to similarly [research the medical value of psychedelics](#).

In Oakland, the first city where a city council voted to broadly deprioritize criminalization of entheogenic substances, lawmakers [approved a follow-up resolution](#) in December that calls for the policy change to be adopted statewide and for local jurisdictions to be allowed to permit healing ceremonies where people could use psychedelics.

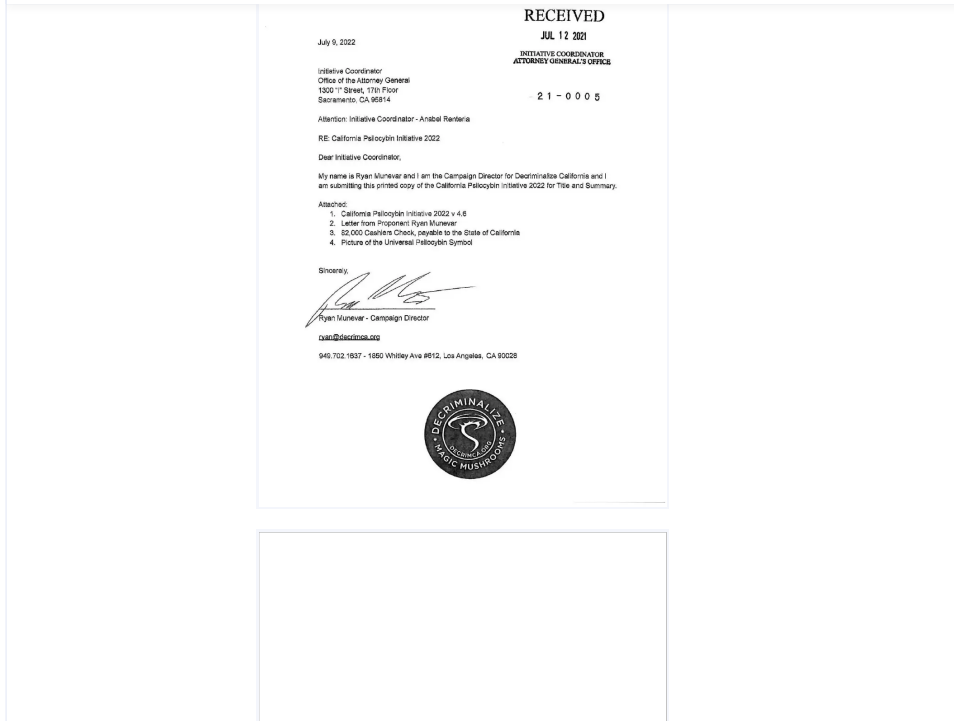
After Ann Arbor legislators passed a decriminalization resolution last year, a county prosecutor recently announced [that his office will not be pursuing charges](#) over possessing entheogenic plants and fungi—“regardless of the amount at issue.”

The Aspen, Colorado City Council [discussed the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#) like psilocybin and proposals to decriminalize such substances at a meeting in May. But members said, as it stands, enacting a reform would be more better handled at the state level while entheogens remain strictly federally controlled.

Seattle lawmakers also recently sent a letter to members of a local task force focused on the opioid overdose epidemic, imploring the group to [investigate the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#) like ayahuasca and ibogaine in curbing addiction.

Read the text of the California psilocybin legalization initiative below:

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[California psilocybin initi...](#) by [Marijuana Moment](#)

Virginia Governor Too 'Busy' To Smoke Marijuana Following Legalization, He Says



The governor of Virginia said on Tuesday that he has not consumed marijuana since the state's legalization law took effect earlier this month. At least not yet. "I have to ask you, have you smoked marijuana since it became legal?" Andy Fox of WAVY-TV asked the governor at a press conference. "No, I haven't," Northam, ... Continue reading


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Photo courtesy of [Wikimedia/Mushroom Observer](#).

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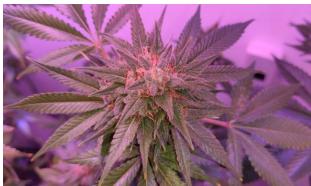




Kyle Jaeger

Kyle Jaeger is Marijuana Moment's Sacramento-based senior editor. His work has also appeared in High Times, VICE and attn.

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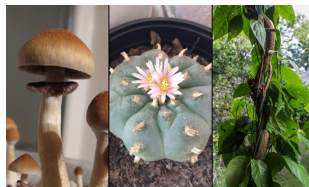
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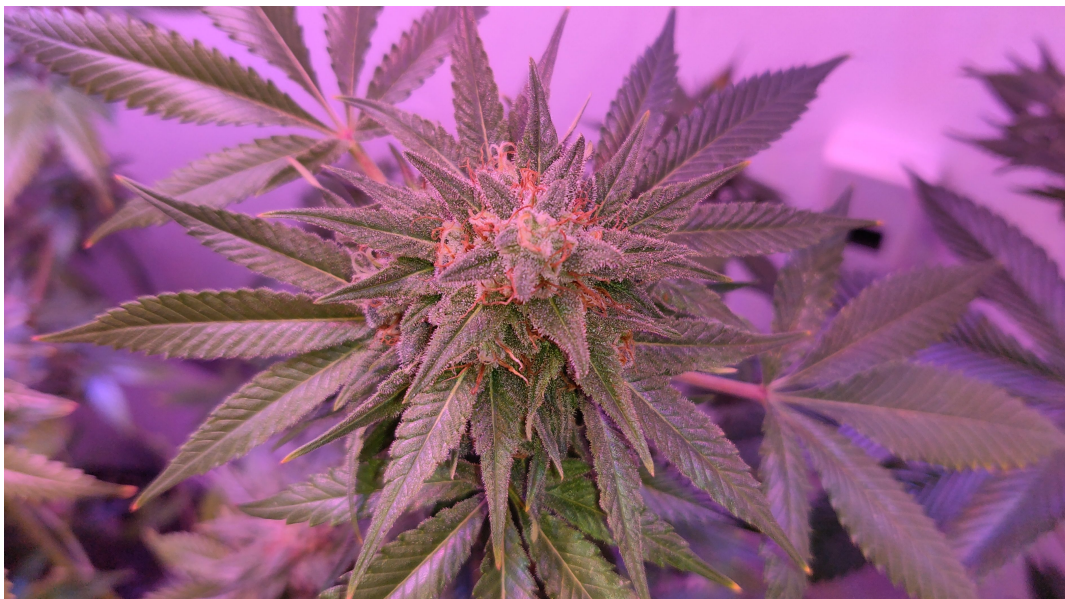
POLITICS

Former Arkansas Lawmaker Launches Campaign To Put Marijuana Legalization On The 2022 Ballot



Published 3 mins ago on October 26, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger



A former Arkansas lawmaker is now heading up a campaign to put marijuana legalization on the state's 2022 ballot.

Eddie Armstrong, a Democrat who previously served as minority leader in the state House of Representatives before leaving office in 2019, is chairing the newly formed advocacy group Responsible Growth Arkansas.

His plan is to place a reform initiative on next year's ballot that would "allow the regulated sale of adult-use cannabis in the state," according to a [statement](#) provided to the Arkansas Democrat Gazette

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State Attorneys General Warn About Marijuana-Infused Candy And Snacks Ahead Of Halloween



Published 3 hours ago on October 26, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger



As Halloween approaches, attorneys general from multiple states across the U.S. are warning parents about illicit marijuana products that resemble popular candies and snacks like Cheetos, Nerds and Oreos, which could confuse kids and lead to accidental intoxication.

In an apparently coordinated effort using identical imagery of the products in question, at least four state attorneys general recently issued advisories about edibles that are misleadingly marketed. The officials aren't necessarily suggesting that people are intentionally handing out the THC-infused candies to trick-or-treaters—a myth that cannabis advocates have long worked to debunk—but it does fit within a theme of messaging that seems to crop up every year around Halloween

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Marijuana Legalization Is More Popular In Maryland Than President Biden, Poll Finds



Published 5 hours ago on October 26, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger



Marijuana legalization is more popular in Maryland than President Joe Biden and the state's two U.S. senators, a new poll found.

As lawmakers work to enact cannabis reform in the coming year, the survey from Goucher College shows a strong majority of the public (60 percent) is in favor of the policy.

But while legalization earned more support than Biden (53 percent) or either Democratic senators, Chris Van Hollen (44 percent) and Ben Cardin (46 percent), that majority support is seven percentage points lower than when Marylanders were last asked about it in March.

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