

POLITICS

# Denver Psychedelics Activists Push To Expand Psilocybin Decriminalization To Allow Gifting And Communal Use



Published 2 months ago on August 31, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger



Denver activists who successfully led a 2019 campaign to make the city [the first in the U.S. to decriminalize psilocybin possession](#) have their eyes set on broader reform, with plans in the works to end the criminalization of noncommercial gifting and communal use of the psychedelic.



Kevin Matthews, who spearheaded the 2019 effort and now serves as the founder of [Vote Nature](#), recently shared some details about the forthcoming push to get the City Council to expand decriminalization under a measure tentatively called the 2021 Denver Community Psilocybin Initiative.”

In a [GoFundMe post](#) seeking contributions to sustain his work on the local reform push, Matthews, who is also president of the city’s official Psilocybin Mushroom Policy Review

Kevin's Fall 2021 GoFundMe



Further, activists will be urging legislators to adopt policies requiring first-responder training on psychedelics harm reduction, promoting public education on the responsible use of psilocybin mushrooms, creating a law enforcement and medical database on psilocybin-related interactions for “ongoing public safety monitoring” and diversifying the review panel that oversees Denver’s decriminalization ordinance.



**Kevin Matthews**  
about 2 months ago

Hello family and friends

It is with humility (and a healthy dose of cortisol ) that I am asking for your financial support right now.

Specifically, it's my hope to raise enough from the community to earn an income for the next two months so that I can keep working to expand decrim in Denver as we engage city council this fall. ... [See More](#) — with Sheva Rachel Sureya and Jared Petsche.



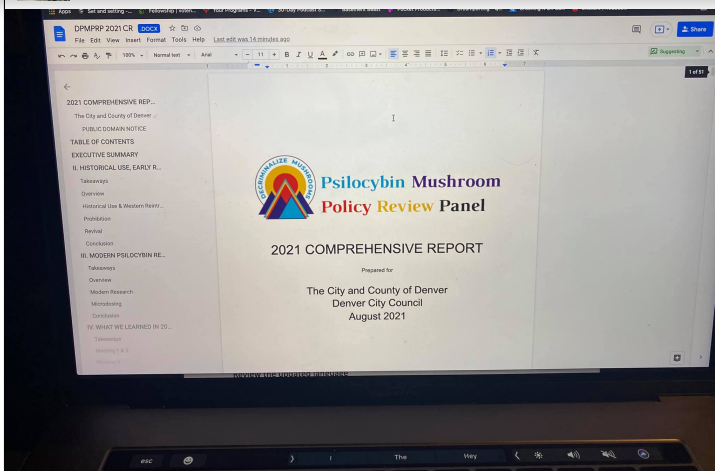
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**Support Kevin to Expand Decriminalization, organized by Kevin M...**

Hi family, friends, and allies of the psychedelic decriminalization movement... Kevi...

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“All of these exciting new developments and recommendations are coming off the heels of the Denver Psilocybin Mushroom Policy Review Panel’s 2021 Comprehensive Report, a 60-page document detailing the impact of decriminalizing psilocybin mushrooms in Denver, which we’ll be presenting in the coming weeks,” he wrote.



Final edits friends. Announcement soon!  
 And then we get to work expanding decriminalization in Denver.  
 Working title: ... [See More](#)

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“Colorado overall is among the worst states in the country in terms of adults experiencing mental health issues,” Matthews told Marijuana Moment. “Psilocybin mushrooms, clearly, have the potential to be a novel solution to these issues. It falls on the shoulders of lawmakers and policymakers to become educated, no longer deny human history and simply honor ancient traditions by expanding civil liberties and human rights to use psilocybin mushrooms in an informed and safe way.”

“The City and County of Denver now has the opportunity to take the lead nationally and finally start exploring real solutions to the mental health crisis that is plaguing our communities so that we can begin to heal,” he said.

The report from the city’s psilocybin review panel, which has been approved by the district attorney and is pending further sign-off by other officials, is expected to be released next month.

Since Denver’s first move to end criminalization for so-called magic mushrooms, there’s been a surge in interest in psychedelics reform at the local, state and federal level.

Most recently, a California Senate-passed bill to legalize possession of a wide range of psychedelics advanced through several Assembly committees, but it will not move further this year following a decision by the sponsor that more time is needed to build the case for the reform and solidify its chances of being enacted.

Meanwhile, California psychedelics activists recently filed a petition for the 2022 ballot to make the state the first in the nation to legalize psilocybin mushrooms for any use. Oakland and Santa Cruz have already enacted psychedelics decriminalization.

The Ann Arbor, Michigan City Council approved the policy change last year—and recently, local lawmakers passed a resolution to officially designate September as Entheogenic Plants and Fungi Awareness Month.

Other Massachusetts cities that have enacted the policy change are: Northampton, Somerville and Cambridge.

The governor of Connecticut recently signed legislation recently that includes language



A New York lawmaker introduced a bill in June 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.

Meanwhile, Portland, Oregon activists are mounting [a push to have local lawmakers pass a resolution](#) decriminalizing the cultivation, gifting and ceremonial use of a wide range of psychedelics.

In a setback for advocates, the U.S. House of Representatives recently voted against a proposal from Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) that [would have removed a spending bill rider](#) that advocates say has restricted federal funds for research into Schedule I drugs, including psychedelics such as psilocybin, MDMA and ibogaine. However, it picked up considerably more votes this round than [when the congresswoman first introduced it](#) in 2019.

Report provisions of separate, House-passed spending legislation also touch on the need to [expand cannabis and psychedelics research](#). The panel urged the National Institute On Drug Abuse (NIDA) to support expanded marijuana studies, for example

It further says that federal health agencies should [pursue research into the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#) for military veterans suffering from a host of mental health conditions.

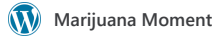
When it comes to broader drug policy reform, Oregon voters also approved an initiative in November to [decriminalize possession of all drugs](#). This year, the Maine House of Representatives [passed a drug decriminalization bill](#), but it later [died in the Senate](#).

In May, lawmakers in Congress filed the [first-ever legislation to federally decriminalize possession](#) of illicit substances.



### Legalization Initiative For 2022 Ballot

Missouri voters may see a multiple marijuana initiatives on the state's 2022 ballot, with a new group filing an adult-use legalization proposal on Friday that could compete with separate reform measures that are already in the works. Legal Missouri 2022 submitted the latest measure to the secretary of state's office, and it will now go ... Continue reading



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Image courtesy of [Kristie Gianopulos](#).

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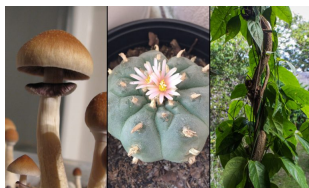
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# State Attorneys General Warn About Marijuana-Infused Candy And Snacks Ahead Of Halloween



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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## POLITICS

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



Published 4 hours ago on October 26, 2021



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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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POLITICS

# DC Voters Strongly Support Drug Decriminalization, Poll Finds As Activists Launch Campaign



Published 7 hours ago on October 26, 2021  
By Kyle Jaeger



Washington, D.C. voters are strongly in favor of proposals to broadly decriminalize drugs and establish harm reduction centers, a new poll found.

One week after activists [announced an effort to pressure local lawmakers enact the reforms](#), a coalition of activists group organized under the banner of DecrimPovertyDC released a survey showing just how popular the policy changes are among D.C. residents. It also found that voters would be more likely to elect local legislators who embrace decriminalization.

At a top level, 83 percent of respondents said that they favor having the D.C. Council pass an ordinance to “remove criminal penalties for possession of small amounts of commonly-used

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