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POLITICS

# 19-Year-Old New Hampshire Lawmaker Prepares Bills To Decriminalize Psilocybin And All Drugs



Published 4 weeks ago on September 30, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger



As New Hampshire lawmakers push to enact marijuana legalization in the state, broader drug policy reform may also be on the horizon, with one of the youngest state legislators in the U.S. now pushing for the decriminalization of psilocybin as well as all currently illicit substances.

The Granite State's legislature is currently under GOP control, and that's created complications for lawmakers hoping to join their neighbors in ending cannabis prohibition and establishing a regulated sales system. Rep. Tony Labranche (D) wants to see that policy change enacted, but he also has his eyes set on ending the drug war more holistically.

The 19-year-old state representative spoke with Marijuana Moment this week about his plans to push legislation to end the criminalization of people who use or possess so-called magic mushrooms and also generally decriminalize possession of any controlled substance.

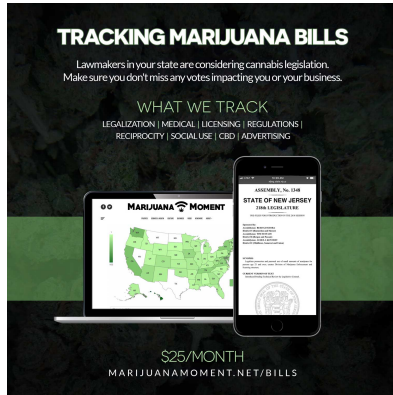
mushrooms, those aren't the hard drugs that are dangerous. And I believe that people should have the right to use it and it should be legalized.”

Whether the legislature currently has the appetite to advance the bold drug reform proposals that Labranche is championing is yet to be seen. But at the very least, he's helping to advance the conversation—and it's a dialogue that's increasingly being led by a younger generation of lawmakers.

Earlier this year, for example, a 20-year-old Kansas lawmaker introduced [a bill to broadly decriminalize drug possession](#) in the state.

Both Labranche and Kansas Rep. Aaron Coleman (D) said that they've been motivated by successful efforts to end drug criminalization in a growing number of jurisdictions, especially as it concerns marijuana and psychedelics.

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**Marijuana Moment is already [tracking more than 1,200 cannabis, psychedelics and drug policy bills](#) in state legislatures and Congress this year. [Patreon supporters](#) pledging at least \$25/month get access to our interactive maps, charts and hearing calendar so they don't miss any developments.**



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The strategy is “taking it one step at a time,” Labranche said. “I believe that it's the natural progression. [Addiction is] a public health issue, it should not be a criminal justice issue.”

SpaceX founder Elon Musk also recently discussed the shifting political dynamics of psychedelics and predicted that, as younger generations assume positions of power in government, there will be a [greater societal embrace of the therapeutic potential](#) of such substances.

Labranche told Marijuana Moment that he was “especially pleased” to see Oregon voters approve a [2020 ballot initiative to decriminalize drug possession](#). He said that's “the aim of what I would like New Hampshire to be like one day.”

The representative recognized, however, that his state has a ways to go before it could become a leader in drug policy reform. He said that marijuana legalization alone represents a steep task and, “I don't see it happening in the near future due to the current political climate.” However, “incremental steps are the right way to go.”

The New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled last year that a man convicted of possession of

session.



**Tony Labranche**  
about a month ago

Hello Amherst, little legislative update. I've spent all week sending in Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) or more simply requests to get legislation drafted. You can see my current LSRs using the link below, just be aware that the list isn't up to date yet and final bill text will be available in a few weeks.



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Another lawmaker, Rep. Stacie-Marie Laughton (D), also requested to have a bill drafted with the goal of “repealing the prohibitions on the possession of controlled drugs and increasing funding for substance abuse services.”

In the meantime, New Hampshire lawmakers have put forward a new strategy to legalize cannabis in the state that involves placing a proposed constitutional amendment [on the ballot for voters to decide on in 2022](#).

Standalone legalization legislation that’s been retained from this year is also set to be taken up when lawmakers reconvene early in 2022, and advocates are hopeful that it will advance based on prior votes in the House. The chamber [passed a legalization bill last year](#), but it died in a Senate committee.

Gov. Chris Sununu (R) remains opposed to adult-use legalization, but advocates are encouraged that he recently signed a bill [adding opioid use disorder as a qualifying condition](#) for the state’s medical cannabis program and also allows out-of-state patients to access dispensaries.

In 2017, the governor signed [a bill decriminalizing marijuana possession](#) in the Granite State, though he continues to argue against adding a legal commercial cannabis sales component.

Separately, a New Hampshire Senate committee in March heard testimony on a House-passed bill to allow medical marijuana patients to [grow a limited number of plants for personal use](#). But it was ultimately tabled in the full chamber.

In May, the governor also signed a bill adding insomnia and autism spectrum disorder as medical cannabis qualifying conditions.

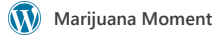
Earlier this year, the House passed legislation to [let medical cannabis patients grow their own medicine](#), but it did not clear the Senate.

## Not To Advance Marijuana Banking Reform Before Legalization



Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) says he and colleagues working to advance a federal marijuana legalization bill have an "agreement" that the body will not take up cannabis banking legislation until more comprehensive reform advances. That said, he's open to exploring an alternative way of advancing banking reform if

lawmakers are able to incorporate ... Continue reading



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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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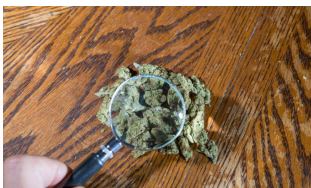
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# Psychedelics Group Issues First Round Of Grants For Community-Based Entheogenic Education In DC



Published 2 hours ago on October 25, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger 



A Washington, D.C.-based psychedelics organization has issued about \$50,000 in its first round of grants for various community groups to support efforts to educate and organize people around plant medicine.

The Plant Medicine Coalition (PMC)—[founded by the head of the D.C. campaign that got psychedelics decriminalization passed locally](#) in last November’s election—dolled out grants to about a dozen groups as part of its Community Grants Program. Funding for the grants was provided by Dr. Bronner’s, a wellness company that’s been involved in a number of marijuana and psychedelics reform efforts across the country.

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## Feds Must Legalize Marijuana, Top Nevada Lawmaker Says (Op-Ed)



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*“In Nevada, we’ve shown that it is possible to create an equitable and business friendly framework that benefits both cannabis business owners and consumers. With federal action, we can take this work to the next level.”*

**By Rep. Steve Yeager for Nevada Current**

With gridlock at the federal level, states have truly become the laboratories of democracy—often leading on legislative policy when Congress is unable. When it comes to cannabis, these laboratories of democracy operate at breakneck speed, with 18 U.S. states legalizing it for both medical and adult “recreational” use and at least some legal use in 37 states and the District



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# Texas Judge Upholds Delta-8 THC Ban In Initial Ruling, But The Fight Isn’t Over



Published 4 hours ago on October 25, 2021

By Kyle Jaeger 



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A Texas judge has ruled that the state's ban on hemp products containing more than 0.3 percent delta-8 THC can remain in effect as a legal challenge moves through the process.

The cannabis company Hometown Hero filed a suit against the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) last week, arguing that it [improperly revised its hemp policy](#) this month to specifically prohibit products with more than trace amounts of forms of THC other than delta-9, the most commonly known psychoactive compound in cannabis.

In a ruling dated Friday and announced on Monday, the court decided against the plaintiffs' request to have a temporary restraining order imposed on the state. Subsequently, the hemp



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