


POLITICS

# Florida Would Study Psychedelics' Medical Benefits Under Top Senate Democrat's New Bill



Published 4 weeks ago on September 27, 2021  
By Tom Angell 



The top Democrat in the Florida Senate filed a bill on Friday that would require the state to research the medical benefits of psychedelics such as psilocybin and MDMA.



If enacted, the state Department of Health would be directed to “conduct a study evaluating the therapeutic efficacy of alternative therapies” such as those substances, as well as ketamine, “in treating mental health and other medical conditions,” including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar disorder, chronic pain and migraines.



The proposal, sponsored by Senate Minority Leader Lauren Book (D) is modeled on [legislation enacted into law in Texas earlier this year](#) that similarly instructs officials in that state to research the therapeutic value of certain psychedelics, although that bill had a narrower focus on helping military veterans with PTSD.

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Psychedelics Group Issues First Round Of Grants For Community-Based Entheogenic Education In DC: The funding is meant to build on the reform movement that's expanding at the local, state and federal level.

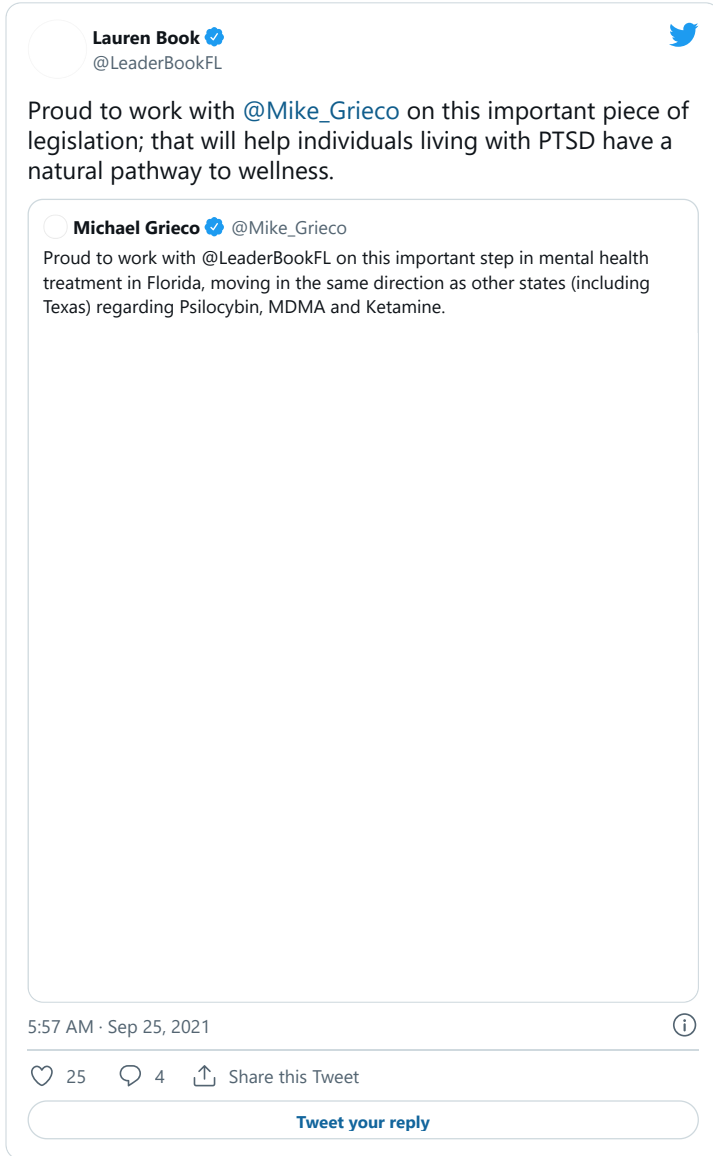
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one of many who embrace the FDA's breakthrough designation for alternate mental health therapies such as psilocybin," Grieco told Marijuana Moment. "This bill will send our state in the right direction, especially amongst our veterans, for patients who are resistant to traditional mental health therapies."



**Lauren Book**    
@LeaderBookFL

Proud to work with @Mike\_Grieco on this important piece of legislation; that will help individuals living with PTSD have a natural pathway to wellness.

**Michael Grieco**  @Mike\_Grieco

Proud to work with @LeaderBookFL on this important step in mental health treatment in Florida, moving in the same direction as other states (including Texas) regarding Psilocybin, MDMA and Ketamine.

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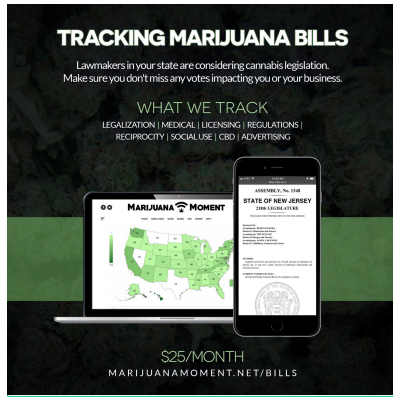
Book said in a press release that the legislation “provides a natural pathway to wellness for patients with debilitating post-traumatic stress disorder and treatment-resistant depression.”

“Psilocybin treatment is a safe alternative for those who have exhausted all other avenues for mental health and wellbeing, and I am proud to sponsor legislation to ensure Floridians have medical access to this life-saving natural treatment,” she said.

Grieco added in the release that “Florida does not have to be the last state to catch up with science every time.”

“Between medical marijuana and climate change, our state seems to never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity,” he said. “The science regarding psilocybin is real, cannot be ignored, and soon will be a universally-accepted form of treatment in the U.S. Veterans and

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

Under the Florida legislation—[SB 348](#) and [HB 193](#)—officials would have to submit a report and recommendations to the governor and top lawmakers by September 1, 2023.

Earlier this year, Grieco filed a more far-reaching bill that would have created a [broader program of legal access to psilocybin for therapeutic use](#), similar to the [ballot measure approved by Oregon voters](#) last year. That legislation failed to advance through committee, however.

“After authoring a very ambitious 59-page bill last year, one that started a broader conversation,” Grieco said, “I am ready to work with both my Republican and Democratic colleagues to create a framework designed to help those patients who need it.”

Last week, [Florida activists filed a marijuana legalization initiative](#) they hope to place on the 2022 ballot. The move comes after the state [Supreme Court invalidated two prior measures](#) the justices deemed to be “misleading.”

Meanwhile, Florida isn't the only state where psychedelics policy moves are being made.

Jurisdictions across the country are increasingly removing or reducing penalties around drug possession and consumption, especially when it comes to psychedelics. Since Denver in 2019 became the first U.S. city to decriminalize psilocybin mushrooms, a number of states and municipalities have made similar changes to dismantle the drug war.

Oregon voters passed a pair of initiatives last November to [legalize psilocybin therapy](#) and [decriminalize possession of all drugs](#). On the local level, activists in Portland are mounting a [push to have local lawmakers pass a resolution](#) decriminalizing the cultivation, gifting and ceremonial use of a wide range of psychedelics.

Washington, D.C. voters also approved a ballot measure last year to [deprioritize enforcement of laws criminalizing psychedelics](#).

Detroit currently stands to become one of the next major cities to decriminalize psychedelics, with the reform proposal [making the local ballot for this November](#).

Elsewhere in Michigan, the Ann Arbor City Council has already elected to make enforcement of laws prohibition psychedelics like psilocybin, ayahuasca and DMT [among the city's lowest priorities](#)—and lawmakers recently followed up by declaring September [Entheogenic Plants and Fungi Awareness Month](#). Advocates have also introduced a reform resolution to the Grand Rapids City Council.

Massachusetts cities that have enacted the policy change include [Northampton](#), [Somerville](#) and [Cambridge](#). In July, state lawmakers heard testimony about a bill to create a task force charged with [studying the implications of legalizing psychedelics like psilocybin and ayahuasca](#).

In Seattle, the City Council is considering a [resolution to decriminalize psychedelics](#).

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](#).

The Maine House of Representatives [passed a drug decriminalization bill](#) this year, but it later [died in the Senate](#).

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.

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

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 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.

There was an attempt by a Republican congressman to attach language into a defense spending bill that would promote research into psychedelics therapy for active duty military members, [but it was not made in order](#) in the House Rules Committee this week.

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

## Seattle City Council Takes First Step Toward Decriminalizing Psychedelic Plants And Fungi

Photo courtesy of [Wikimedia/Workman](#).

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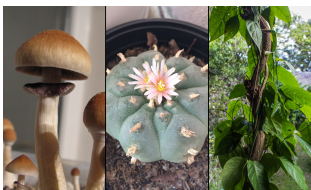


Tom Angell



Tom Angell is the editor of Marijuana Moment. A 20-year veteran in the cannabis law reform movement, he covers the policy and politics of marijuana. Separately, he founded the nonprofit Marijuana Majority. Previously he reported for Marijuana.com and MassRoots, and handled media relations and campaigns for Law Enforcement Against Prohibition and Students for Sensible Drug Policy. (Organization citations are for identification only and do not constitute an endorsement or partnership.)

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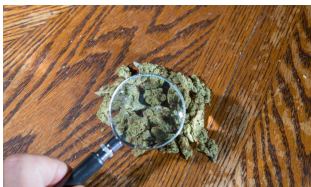
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# Psychedelics Group Issues First Round Of Grants For Community-Based Entheogenic Education In DC



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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 Published 3 hours ago on October 25, 2021  
By Marijuana Moment



*“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 



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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