



MARIJUANA MOMENT

POLITICS SCIENCE & HEALTH CULTURE BUSINESS VIDEO NEWSLETTER ▾ BILL TRACKING ▾ ABOUT MARIJUANA MOMENT ▾



POLITICS

Bipartisan Congressional Lawmakers Tell DEA To Allow Psilocybin Treatment For Terminal Patients



Published 3 days ago on January 18, 2022
By **Kyle Jaeger**



Bipartisan members of Congress sent a letter on Tuesday requesting that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) allow terminally ill patients to use psilocybin as an investigational treatment without the fear of federal prosecution.



Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) [started circulating a Dear Colleague letter](#) to build support for the request last month. Now signed by a coalition of lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, the letter to DEA stresses that there are state and federal right-to-try (RTT) laws that should make it so certain patients can obtain the psychedelic given that it's shown early potential in ongoing clinical trials.

DEA has denied access, however, [resulting in a lawsuit that was filed in March](#) by a Washington State doctor who sought federal guidance to treat terminal patients with psilocybin mushrooms and was told there wasn't a legal avenue for him to do so.

The lawmakers said DEA is "obstructing access to psilocybin for therapeutic use consistent with the letter and intent Right to Try (RTT) laws."

MARIJUANA NEWS IN YOUR INBOX

Email address:



Marijuana Moment
Like Page 28K likes



Marijuana Moment
4 hours ago

Bipartisan Pennsylvania Senators File Bill To Let Medical Marijuana Patients Grow Their Own Plants: The measure would "help ease the cost and accessibility burdens for this important medicine."

<https://www.marijuanamoment.net/bipartisan-pennsylvania-se.../>



MARIJUANAMOMENT.NET

Bipartisan Pennsylvania Sen...

SUPPORT MARIJUANA MOMENT

[Become a patron](#)

“Research demonstrates that psilocybin provides immediate, substantial and sustained relief from debilitating anxiety and depression in individuals with terminal illnesses,” the letter states. “We strongly believe that our constituents suffering such illnesses should have access to this investigational drug should they decide to pursue such a course of treatment.”

Beside Blumenauer, the other signatories on the letter are Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Andy Biggs (R-AZ), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Dean Phillips (D-MN) and Madeleine Dean (D-PA).

Biggs stands out as an especially interesting signatory given that he’s been openly hostile toward marijuana reform, voting against proposals to end federal prohibition and protect banks that work with state-legal cannabis businesses. The congressman also once inaccurately claimed on the House floor that voters in his state only “barely” approved a measure to legalize marijuana during the 2020 election. In fact, it passed 60-40 percent.

That said, right-to-try laws seem to have broader support among Republicans, with Congress and 41 states having adopted such policies, which allow patients with terminal conditions to try investigational medications that have not been approved for general use. The new letter says DEA has “has failed to abide” by the law.

The lawsuit against DEA is currently before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which heard oral arguments in the case in September. Washington State’s attorney general’s office joined the plaintiffs in support of psilocybin access. DEA argued that the court should dismiss the suit because it lacked jurisdiction.

The lawmakers’ letter is addressed to DEA Administrator Anne Milgram, who was appointed by President Joe Biden and confirmed by the Senate over the summer.

“Urgent action is needed to ensure that people currently suffering terminal illness can elect treatment involving psilocybin,” it says. “We therefore urge you to take quick action to ensure that the DEA follows duly enacted RTT law and accommodates constituents with terminal illnesses in receiving psilocybin for therapeutic use.”

Blumenauer separately told Marijuana Moment last month that he’s “excited” about advancements in psychedelics research, as well as the implementation of a psilocybin therapy program that’s being set up in his home state of Oregon, where voters approved the historic reform during last year’s election.

Oregon’s initiative is “a model about how to take advantage of the this therapy for people who desperately need it,” he said. “There are a number of opportunities to demonstrate the power of this therapy. And we are, in a very thoughtful and systematic way, implementing that in Oregon to show how it can result.”

“I think this discussion needs to take place on Capitol Hill—and it’s something that I would like to occur early in the new the new year,” Blumenauer said. “Let people understand the potential, using opportunities now for people in the late stages of life to be able to try this using federal legislation.”

Read the text of the letter to DEA on right-to-try for psilocybin below:

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 18, 2022

Anne Melissa Milgram
Administrator
U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
600 Army Navy Drive
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Administrator Milgram,

We write to voice concern about the U.S. Drug and Enforcement Administration's (DEA) obstructing access to psilocybin for therapeutic use consistent with the letter and intent Right to Try (RTT) laws. Research demonstrates that psilocybin provides immediate, substantial, and sustained relief from debilitating anxiety and depression in individuals with terminal illnesses. We strongly believe that our constituents suffering such illnesses should have access to this investigational drug should they decide to pursue such a course of treatment.

Individuals with advanced cancer that are also suffering from treatment-resistant anxiety and/or depression have been found to experience significant reductions in both anxiety and depression, and improvements in mood, following a single guided session of psilocybin-assisted therapy, with no safety concerns or clinically significant adverse effects.¹ Of note, researchers have also found that the benefits from such a treatment are sustained, with patients experiencing increases in measures of quality of life, life meaning, death acceptance, and optimism six months after treatment. We are excited by this research and the implications it has for our constituents suffering terminal illness.

Recognizing that people with terminal conditions do not have the luxury of time to await the slow approval process for new drugs, in 2018 federal lawmakers enacted the Right to Try Act, echoing 41 similar State legislative enactments, to ensure that these individuals have access to drugs in investigational stages. RTT statutes allow for terminally ill individuals to access drugs still in investigational stages. Psilocybin qualifies as an investigational drug under the terms outlined in applicable state and federal statutes. Notwithstanding, suffering dying individuals seeking treatment with psilocybin are being prohibited from receiving such a treatment because of the DEA's refusal to accommodate RTT. This has led the Advanced Integrative Medical Science Institute (AIMS), an outpatient oncology clinic and research institute that has been denied access to psilocybin for therapeutic use with terminally ill individuals, to file suit against the DEA (AIMS, et al v. USDEA). This case can and ought to be quickly settled in a manner which addresses DEA's legitimate concerns about ensuring adequate security to prevent diversion, while enabling dying cancer patients such as those in the AIMS case access to psilocybin, as intended by RTT laws. Urgent action is needed to ensure that people currently

¹ Griffiths et al., *Psilocybin Produces Substantial and Sustained Decreases in Depression and Anxiety in Patients With Life-Threatening Cancer: A Randomized Double-Blind Trial*, 30 J. Psychopharmacology 1181, 1195 (2016)

Austin Lawmakers Approve Marijuana Decriminalization Initiative For May Ballot

The Austin City Council on Tuesday approved a proposal to put an activist-led initiative to decriminalize marijuana and ban no-knock police raids on the local ballot in May. Ground Game Texas successfully collected enough signatures to place the reform on the Austin ballot. The council had a chance to adopt it as an ordinance on ...
[Continue reading](#)



Marijuana Moment

Marijuana Moment is made possible with support from readers. If you rely on our cannabis advocacy journalism to stay informed, please consider a monthly Patreon pledge.

 [BECOME A PATRON](#)

RELATED TOPICS: [#FEATURED](#)

DON'T MISS



Austin Lawmakers Approve Marijuana Decriminalization Initiative For May Ballot

UP NEXT

Federal Probe Into Missouri Medical Marijuana Licensing May Be Ongoing, Court Documents Suggest



Kyle Jaeger



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

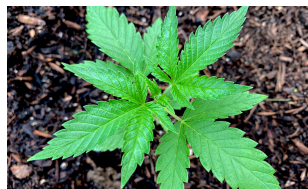
YOU MAY LIKE



Bipartisan Pennsylvania Senators File Bill To Let Medical Marijuana Patients Grow Their Own Plants



Minnesota Democratic Leaders Preview Marijuana Legalization Plan For 2022



Nebraska Activists Say New GOP Medical Marijuana Bill Is A 'Poison Pill' Meant To Detract From Ballot Efforts



Banking Activity Increases In States That Legalize Marijuana, Study Finds



Biden's cannabis record after a year in office (Newsletter: January 21, 2022)



Rhode Island Governor Includes Marijuana Legalization And Expungements In Budget Request

POLITICS

Bipartisan Pennsylvania Senators File Bill To Let Medical Marijuana Patients Grow Their

Own Plants



Published 5 hours ago on January 21, 2022

By **Kyle Jaeger**



A bipartisan group of Pennsylvania senators introduced a bill on Thursday that would allow medical marijuana patients to cultivate their own plants for personal use.

Sens. Dan Laughlin (R) and Sharif Street (D) first [announced their intent to file the legislation](#) in November, arguing that it is a necessary reform to ensure patient access by giving people a less costly alternative to buying from dispensaries.

Registered patients who are 21 and older, and who have been residents of the state for at least 30 days, could grow up to six plants in an “enclosed and locked space” at their residence, according to the text of the bill. They would be allowed to buy cannabis seeds from licensed

CONTINUE READING

POLITICS

Minnesota Democratic Leaders Preview Marijuana Legalization Plan For 2022



Published 5 hours ago on January 21, 2022

By **Kyle Jaeger**



Minnesota Democratic leaders are preparing for another push to legalize marijuana this session, with the sponsor of the House-passed reform bill saying he will be reworking the legislation in an effort to build further support—though it continues to face an uphill climb in the GOP-controlled Senate.

House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler (D) and Senate Minority Leader Melisa Franzen (D) discussed the legislative strategy during a roundtable event hosted by the Minnesota Hemp Growers Cooperative on Wednesday.

Winkler said that his bill, which moved through 12 committees before being approved on the

CONTINUE READING

POLITICS

Nebraska Activists Say New GOP Medical Marijuana Bill Is A ‘Poison Pill’ Meant To Detract From Ballot Efforts



Published 6 hours ago on January 21, 2022

By **Kyle Jaeger**



A Republican Nebraska senator introduced a bill on Thursday that ostensibly seeks to legalize medical marijuana in the state—but activists have raised concerns that the restrictive measure may be an attempt to subvert an effort to pass even broader patient protections on the 2022 ballot.

Sen. Mike Groene (R) filed the legislation, which would allow certain patients to buy and possess cannabis oils, pills and up to two and a half ounces of flower at a limited number of dispensaries. Smoking or inhaling marijuana would be banned, however, as would making edibles—so it’s not clear how patients would consume the flower they could possess.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



[ABOUT MARIJUANA MOMENT](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING](#) [PRIVACY POLICY](#)

All the cannabis news you need, all in one place. Copyright © 2017-2021 Marijuana Moment LLC ® and Tom Angell