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Virginia Could Decriminalize Psilocybin And Other Psychedelics With Newly Filed Bills



Published 1 month ago on January 14, 2022
By Kyle Jaeger



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Top Federal Drug Agency Funds Research On Differing Legal Marijuana Regulatory Models: The notice is meant to "encourage grant applications on the effects of changing cannabis laws and policies in the US and globally."

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Virginia lawmakers introduced new bills this week to decriminalize the possession of psychedelics.

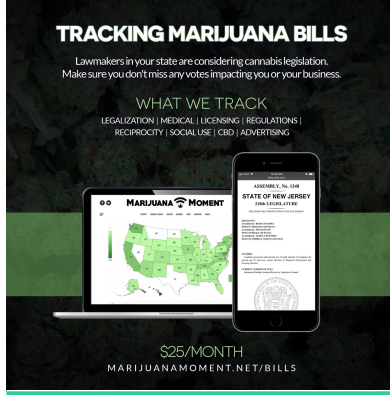
The proposals in the House of Delegates and Senate are nearly identical, except that the measure in the former chamber covers several psychedelic substances while the other would only reduce penalties for psilocybin and psilocyn.

The House proposal would amend state drug statute by making possession of "peyote, ibogaine, psilocybin, or psilocyn" by adults 21 and older a civil penalty that carries a \$100 fine. Currently, such possession is considered a Class 5 felony.

Any dollars collected from psychedelics possession violations would go to the state's Drug Offender Assessment and Treatment Fund, which supports substance misuse treatment programs and drug courts.

Marijuana Moment is already [tracking more than 900 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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Del. Dawn Adams (D) and Sen. Ghazala Hashmi (D) are sponsoring the nearly [identical measures](#).

At a recent virtual event organized by the reform group Decriminalize Nature Virginia, [the lawmakers participated as hosts](#), sharing their perspectives about the growing body of research indicating that psychedelics could be powerful tools to combat conditions like treatment-resistant depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

“One thing that has intrigued me in the process of learning myself is the kind of tremendous research that is available that demonstrates that these particular plant based medicines have the capacity to heal, to help and assist people in ways that other medicines often cannot do,” Hashmi said at the December event.

Adams, for her part, said she’s “spent a lot of time studying plant medicine, particularly psilocybin” and she reached the conclusion that “it offers unique and extraordinary paths to help people out of things like fear at the end of life and refractory depression and PTSD.”

A potential challenge for the bill sponsors will be moving a psychedelics reform proposal through the House under new GOP leadership. And if the legislature does approve the legislation, it could face resistance from the state’s incoming Republican governor, Glenn Youngkin, who has expressed concerns about [implementing a commercial marijuana market](#) in line with what the Democratic legislature and outgoing governor approved last year.

But the filing of the psychedelics bill in Virginia is just the latest example of state lawmakers following the tide of local decriminalization efforts that have played out across the country.

For example, a Republican Missouri lawmaker on Wednesday introduced a bill to give residents with serious illnesses legal [access to a range of psychedelic drugs](#) like psilocybin, ibogaine and LSD through an expanded version of the state’s existing right-to-try law.

California Sen. Scott Wiener (D) told Marijuana Moment in a recent interview that his bill to [legalize psychedelics possession](#) stands a 50/50 chance of reaching the governor’s desk this year. It already cleared the full Senate and two Assembly committees during the first half of the two-year session.

In Michigan, a pair of state senators introduced a bill in September to [legalize the possession, cultivation and delivery](#) of various plant- and fungi-derived psychedelics like psilocybin and mescaline.

Washington State lawmakers [also introduced legislation this month](#) that would legalize what the bill calls “supported psilocybin experiences” by adults 21 and older.

In Vermont, a broad coalition of lawmakers representing nearly a third of the House introduced a bill to [decriminalize drug possession](#).

New Hampshire lawmakers filed measures to [decriminalize psilocybin and all drugs](#).

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

Similar legislation was [also enacted in the Texas legislature](#), requiring the state to study the medical risks and benefits of psilocybin, MDMA and ketamine for military veterans in partnership with Baylor College of Medicine and a military-focused medical center.

Voters in Oregon approved 2020 [ballot measures to decriminalize all drugs](#) and [legalize psilocybin therapy](#).

These States Could Legalize Marijuana Or Psychedelics In 2022



Advocates scored a significant number of marijuana reform victories in state legislatures in 2021, but they're hopeful they can get even more accomplished in the new year. In states across the country, activists are already in the process of qualifying cannabis legalization and other drug policy reform measures for November 2022 ballots as

lawmakers separately ... [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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POLITICS

Top Federal Drug Agency Funds Research On Differing Legal Marijuana Regulatory Models



Published 10 hours ago on February 21, 2022

By Kyle Jaeger



The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is renewing its push to promote federally funded research into marijuana as more states enact reform—specifically expressing interest in studies on differing cannabis regulatory models that are in place across the country.

In a notice of interest published on Friday, the agency outlined the types of study proposals it hopes to fund and gave instructions to researchers on how to apply. NIDA said the guidance is informed by recommendations from a [workgroup it set up to explore the issue in 2018](#).

The study solicitation is [nearly identical to one NIDA put out in 2019](#), but that earlier notice expired last month. Evidently the agency is committed to seeing these research objectives

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Colorado Lawmaker Presses For Marijuana Science Review To Look Fairly At Benefits As

Well As Harms



Published 11 hours ago on February 21, 2022
By **Marijuana Moment**



“Just putting this information together and putting it into the form that is useful is an extraordinarily large task.”

By **Faith Miller, Colorado Newsline**

Researchers have made “a great deal of progress” on reviewing available evidence of high-potency marijuana products’ health effects, the dean of the Colorado School of Public Health told state lawmakers Friday.

The scientific review is required under 2021 legislation, [House Bill 21-1317](#), that sought

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Police Keep Arresting People For Drugs Even As Incarceration Rates Drop, Pew Study Finds



Published 13 hours ago on February 21, 2022
By **Kyle Jaeger**



Even as states have adopted less punitive drug policies—with an emphasis on treatment over incarceration—police have continued to arrest people for illegal substances at a steady rate, a new analysis from the Pew Charitable Trust found.

The report details several interesting trends in drug policy and enforcement that developed from 2009 to 2019. Researchers identified “divergent enforcement trends—high rates of arrest but substantially reduced incarceration—coupled with a lack of treatment options and high mortality rates among people with illicit drug dependence.”

There are a few data points that advocates are encouraged by: lower rates of incarceration.

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