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Colorado House Passes Bill To Leg MDMA After Federal Approval, Sen The Senate



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By **Kyle Jaeger** 



The Colorado House of Representatives recently approved a bill that would align state law to legalize MDMA prescriptions if and when the federal government ultimately permits use, sending it to the Senate.



The bipartisan and bicameral legislation—sponsored by Reps. Patrick Neville (R) and Ortiz (D), along with Sens. John Cooke (R) and Joann Ginal (D)—passed third and final time on the floor in a 53-2 vote last week. That action came just days after the bill was announced and approved by the House Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services Committee.

Colorado House 2022 Legislative Day 087



Unfortunately for advocates, that panel also rejected separate legislation to create a psychedelics review panel to study substances like psilocybin and DMT and issue recommendations on possible policy changes.

The MDMA legislation approved by the House, meanwhile, would legalize “prescribing, dispensing, transporting, possessing, and using” MDMA if the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves the substance as a prescription drug.

While the floor vote on final passage didn’t include debate of the proposal, there was a brief discussion one day earlier when the bill was considered on second reading in the chamber.

Neville, one of the bill sponsors, said that MDMA has “been proven to be extremely effective in treatment of PTSD.” And so he wants to ensure that Colorado is prepared to provide that treatment option pending a federal policy change.

Colorado House 2022 Legislative Day 086



“The medication, what it truly does—and I can speak to this personally having gone through therapy for PTSD—is the medication is truly just a catalyst for the therapy to work because it opens the person up to actually explain about their circumstances,” he said.

There were some technical amendments that had been adopted in committee, as well as a change to the language of the findings section of the bill. It now says that MDMA is “effective if paired with talk therapy and counseling” and notes that “it is widely expected that the federal Food and Drug Administration will approve MDMA-assisted therapy for prescription use for PTSD as soon as 2023.”

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Marijuana Moment is already [tracking more than 1,000 cannabis, psychedelics 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 Senate Health & Human Services Committee is now scheduled to take up the psychedelic legislation on April 25.

Activists in Colorado might feel encouraged to see the modest reform measure advance, but not everyone is waiting around for the legislature to act. There are two campaigns set to place [psilocybin legalization on the state's November ballot](#).

The psychedelics reform movement has spread rapidly throughout state legislatures in recent sessions.

For example, Maryland lawmakers [sent a bill to the governor last week](#) that would create a state fund to provide “cost-free” access to psychedelics like psilocybin, MDMA and ketamine for military veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic injury.

Also this month, Georgia lawmakers advanced a bipartisan resolution that calls for the formation of a House study committee to [investigate the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#) like psilocybin and make recommendations for reforms.

The governor of Utah last month signed a bill to create a task force to study and make recommendations [on the therapeutic potential of psychedelic drugs](#) and possible regulations for their lawful use.

A Missouri House committee also held a hearing last month on a GOP-led bill to [legalize a wide range of psychedelics for therapeutic use](#) at designated care facilities while further decriminalizing low-level possession in general.

Connecticut lawmakers are also taking interest in the therapeutic potential of psychedelics with a legislative committee passing a bill last month that would provide certain patients [access to psychedelic-assisted treatment](#) with substances like MDMA and psilocybin.

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont (D) signed a separate bill last year that includes language requiring the state to [carry out a study into the therapeutic potential](#) of psilocybin mushrooms. A [workgroup](#) has since been meeting to investigate the issue.

The Washington State legislature recently sent a budget bill to the governor's desk that includes a proposal to [direct \\$200,000 in funding to support a new workgroup](#) to study the possibility of legalizing psilocybin services in the state, including the idea of using current marijuana regulatory systems to track psychedelic mushrooms.

Last month, the Hawaii Senate approved a bill to set up a state working group to study therapeutic benefits of psilocybin mushrooms and develop a “long-term” plan to ensure the psychedelic is accessible for medical use for adults 21 and older.

Also last month, the Oklahoma House of Representatives passed a bill to decriminalize level possession of psilocybin and promote research into the therapeutic potential of psychedelic.

Rhode Island lawmakers introduced a pair of drug decriminalization bills last month including one focused on psilocybin and buprenorphine that would authorize doctors to prescribe the psychedelic mushroom.

An Oregon Senate committee also recently advanced a bill to ensure that equity is built into the state’s historic therapeutic psilocybin program that’s actively being implemented following voter approval in 2020.

A bill to decriminalize a wide array of psychedelics in Virginia was taken up by a House Delegates panel in January, only to be pushed off until 2023. A separate Senate proposal to decriminalize psilocybin alone was later defeated in a key committee.

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

Washington State lawmakers also introduced legislation in January that would legalize the bill calls “supported psilocybin experiences” by adults 21 and older.

Meanwhile, a Pennsylvania bill meant to promote research into the therapeutic potential of psilocybin mushrooms for certain mental health conditions may be in jeopardy, with the bill’s sponsor saying that the chair of a key House committee is expressing reservations even before the legislation was amended in an effort to build support.

New Hampshire lawmakers filed measures to decriminalize psilocybin and all drugs.

Legislation was also enacted by the Texas legislature last year 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.

At the congressional level, bipartisan lawmakers sent a letter to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in January, urging that the agency [allow terminally ill patients psilocybin](#) as an investigational treatment without the fear of federal prosecution.

New Congressional Bill Would Put Marijuana Penalties For Military Members On Par With Alcohol-Related Punishments



A new congressional bill would make it so the punishment for military service members who use or possess marijuana could not exceed penalties for being drunk or incapacitated on duty. Rep. Anthony Brown (D-MD) filed the Restoring Equity For Offenses Related to Marijuana (REFORM) Act last week. It would amend the Uniform Code

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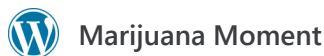


Photo courtesy of [Pretty Drugthings](#) on Unsplash.

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Kyle Jaeger



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

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