

POLITICS

Massachusetts Psychedelics Activists Plan To Put Decriminalization On Local Ballot And Force Lawmakers To File State Bills



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By **Kyle Jaeger** 



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Massachusetts activists are gearing up for a multi-pronged push to advance ps... reform locally and at the state level, with a campaign kicking off a signature drive las... put a decriminalization measure on the ballot in the state's second largest city.

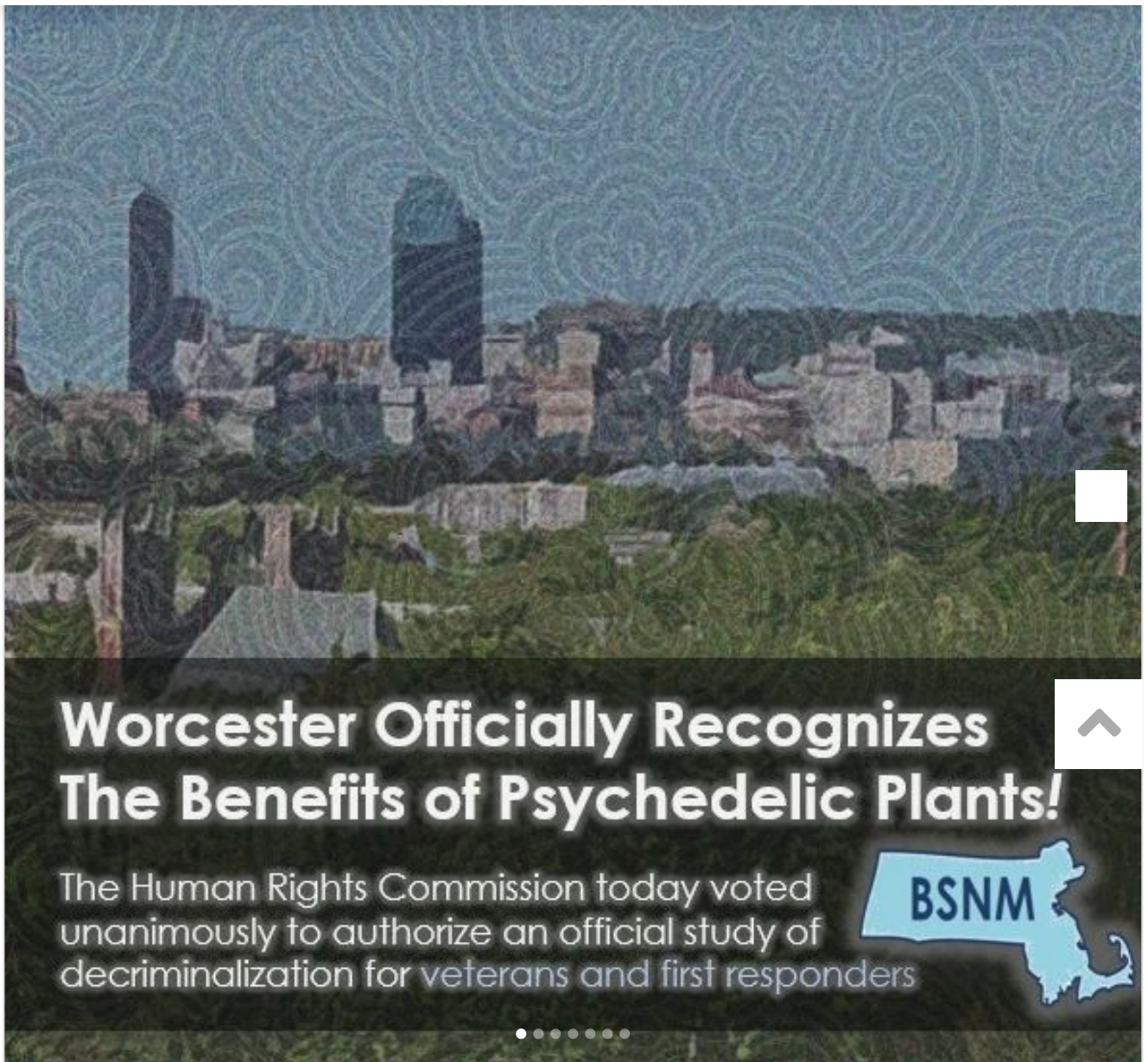


The Bay Staters for National Medicine (BSNM) campaign launched its signature gath... effort to put the policy change before Worcester voters just days after the city's Hum... Commission approved a resolution urging the city manager to conduct a study on "th... of making arrests for growing and distributing entheogenic plants like psilocybin mu... among veterans and first-responders the lowest law enforcement priority of the Worc... Police Department."

Separately, activists are deploying a strategy to have Massachusetts residents force st... lawmakers to file legislation to both legalize entheogenic substances for therapeutic... otherwise decriminalize certain psychedelics.

Both the Worcester initiative and the statewide legislation focus on psychedelics, but... would also broadly decriminalize low-level possession of all currently illicit drugs. Ac



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Hope is a beautiful thing 🍄 🌿

The second biggest city in the Northeast has now voted to recognize the benefits of plant medicines like psilocybin mushrooms as well as the dangers of allowing Big Pharma to restrict access for profit

Our nation has left its veterans and first-responders out to rot as they struggle with post traumatic stress disorder at nearly five times the rate of ordinary community members. This is a moral travesty.

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attempted takeover of these medicines and end the backwards drug war policies costing our communities so dearly

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Psychedelics reform has moved quickly at the local level in jurisdictions throughout Massachusetts. If Worcester ultimately takes the step to decriminalize, it would be jo other cities in the Bay State that have already enacted similar policy changes: [Somer](#) [Cambridge](#), [Easthampton](#) and [Northampton](#).

The text of the Worcester ballot initiative would make it so no government body in th including law enforcement, could use any funding to criminalize adults 18 and possessing or sharing up to five grams of any controlled substance (except “an bufotenine and animal-derived kambo”).

Then there’s specific language around certain psychedelic substances, including psiloc DMT, mescaline, MDMA and ibogaine. Local agencies couldn’t use funding to prosec for possessing, cultivating or sharing up to 15 grams of those substances.

The measure seeks to further protect people against being criminalized for possessin “pipes, syringes, needles, or testing strips.”

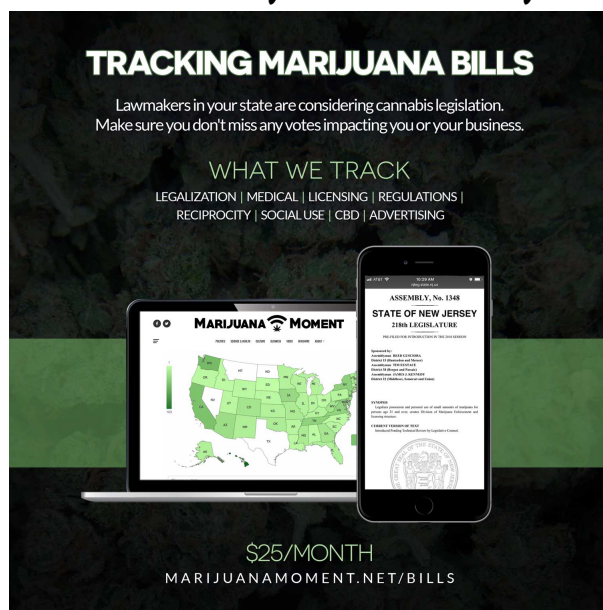
Activists told Marijuana Moment that they will soon be pursuing a similar psychedeli initiative in another Massachusetts city, Amherst.

The local push is just one part of the strategy, though. BSNM is also helping to organ statewide effort, leveraging a unique legislative process in the state whereby citizens to make the legislators who represent them file bills “by request” even if the sponsor personally back the policy.

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The proposed state legislation would further seek to promote criminal justice reform expanding expungements policies and creating a task force to recommend additional to aid those most impacted by criminalization while also expanding support for ment programs.

Marijuana Moment is already [tracking more than 1,000 cannabis, psychedelics drug policy bills](#) in state legislatures and Congress this year. [Patreon supporter](#) pledging at least \$25/month get access to our interactive maps, charts and hea calendar so they don't miss any developments.



Learn more about our [marijuana bill tracker](#) and become a [supporter on Patreon](#) access.

Davis said that this “grassroots drive will push the conversation nationally” and help as they work to “build a holistic coalition for reform that brings together psychedelic enthusiasts, justice advocates, the addiction community, therapists, law enforcement conservationists and scientists.”

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Meanwhile, Massachusetts lawmakers last year heard testimony on separate proposals to [decriminalize drug possession and establish a pilot program](#) for safe injection facilities where people could use illicit substances in a medically supervised environment to prevent deaths and facilitate treatment.

The decriminalization bill would [replace criminal penalties for the possession of any controlled substance](#) with a civil fine of up to \$50.

The separate, less far-reaching bill would direct the Department of Public Health to “evaluate the feasibility” of safe consumption sites and then report back to lawmakers.

With respect to psychedelics, Rep. Mike Connolly (D) also filed a bill last year [that requires a Joint Judiciary Committee hearing on studying the implications of legalizing entheogenic substances like psilocybin and ayahuasca](#).

None of those bills have received votes.

Psychedelics reform is also advancing outside of Massachusetts in state legislatures across the country.

For example, a Hawaii House committee on Thursday [approved a Senate-passed resolution](#) requesting that the state form of a psilocybin working group that would explore the therapeutic potential of the psychedelic.

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 its use, sending it to the Senate.

Maryland lawmakers [sent a bill to the governor this month](#) that would create a state program to provide “cost-free” access to psychedelics like psilocybin, MDMA and ketamine for military veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain 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](#)

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 with [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 explore the possibility of legalizing psilocybin services in the state, including the idea of using marijuana regulatory systems to track psychedelic mushrooms. 

Last month, the Oklahoma House of Representatives passed a bill to [decriminalize low-level possession of psilocybin](#) and promote research into the therapeutic potential of the 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](#).

Washington State lawmakers [also introduced legislation in January](#) that would legaliz the bill calls “supported psilocybin experiences” by adults 21 and older.

Meanwhile, a Pennsylvania bill meant to promote research into the therapeutic pote psilocybin mushrooms for certain mental health conditions may be in jeopardy, with sponsor saying that the chair of a key House committee is [expressing reservations ev 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 s 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 Enfo Administration (DEA) in January, urging that the agency [allow terminally ill p psilocybin](#) as an investigational treatment without the fear of federal prosecution. 

Read the [text](#) of the Worcester psychedelics initiative and the statewide reform below:





DEA Says Illegal Marijuana Trafficking From Mexico Is Declining Amid State Legalization Movement

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) said in a new report that as more marijuana is being produced domestically in the U.S., it's undermining illicit cannabis trafficking from Mexico. As part of its Fiscal Year 2023 performance budget summary submitted to Congress, the agency talked about shifting trends in marijuana production, as well as its own ... Continue reading



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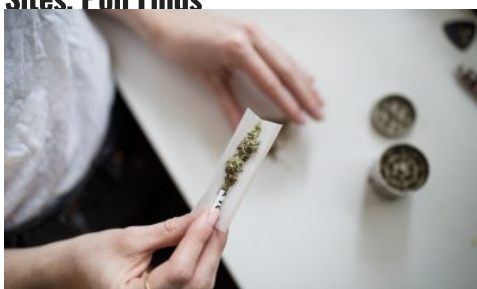
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Kyle Jaeger is Marijuana Moment's Sacramento-based senior editor. His work has also appeared in High VICE and attn.

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