



PRINCIPLES FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH AND EQUITY APPROACH TO CANNABIS REGULATION

NEW YORK'S LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS REMAIN STRONGLY OPPOSED TO REGULATED RECREATIONAL ADULT USE OF CANNABIS.

The legalization of adult-use recreational cannabis is a health negative revenue proposal.

A 2018 Report based on research conducted by the independent research firm QREM, found that for every \$1.00 of revenue gained from legalized cannabis, Colorado spent \$4.50 in mitigating the negative effects related to legalization.

Medical use of cannabis for legitimate health conditions is already legal in New York State, and decriminalization of cannabis use and possession, as well as expungement of past non-violent cannabis related crimes is also codified in statute. Thus, the legalization and subsequent promotion and normalization of the use of recreational cannabis has no positive public health benefits; in fact, it threatens to undermine New York's strong tobacco control infrastructure by normalizing the use of this dangerous product.

POTENTIAL NEGATIVE HEALTH IMPACTS INCLUDE:

1. Lack of substantive research on use of marijuana and associated health outcomes
2. Risk of addiction
3. Possible role as a gateway drug
4. Negative cognitive and academic effects
5. Relation to mental illness, particularly among adolescents
6. Adverse cardiac and respiratory effects
7. Unintentional exposures in children
8. Risk of motor vehicle accidents

HOWEVER, NYSACHO RECOGNIZES THAT LEGALIZATION CONTINUES TO HAVE PROPONENTS AND GROWING SUPPORT.

Should adult use cannabis legislation move forward in New York State, NYSACHO believes that public health and health equity need to be the first policy issues addressed, and should underpin all policies. The primary goals of cannabis legalization in New York State should be to institute regulatory structures to prevent or mitigate harm. ***Cannabis, like alcohol and tobacco, is an addictive substance that should not be treated as an ordinary commodity in the marketplace.*** The basic philosophy underlying the following principles is that, should the sale of adult-use cannabis be legalized it should be implemented cautiously to reduce the social harm of illegality, and that cannabis sale and consumption should not be normalized.

TO THAT END, NYSACHO RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

GET IT RIGHT FROM THE START

- **Put infrastructure in place before sales begin.** Regulations and rules, appropriate testing of infrastructure and critical staff onboarding should be finalized prior to beginning of sales.
- **Ensure that county health departments and local mental health and substance abuse agencies receive flexible funding** to expand workforce capacity in community education, prevention, intervention, enforcement and treatment. Public health is a major pillar in the success of a regulated marijuana program and must be funded sufficiently to ensure harm reduction.



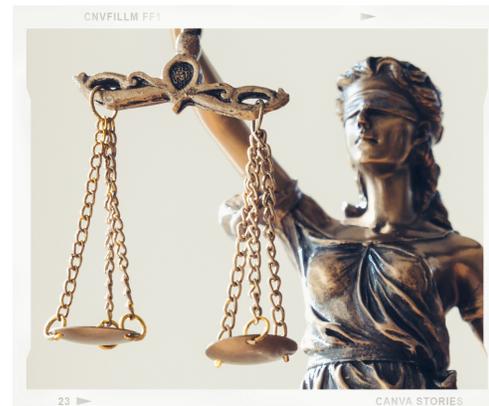
PROTECT CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- **Prohibit any products, packaging or marketing attractive to children or youth**, such as cannabis-infused beverages, flavored combustibles, vaping products and wrappers, and products that resemble candy.
- **Limit the number of dispensaries to fewer than 1:15,000 people** to reduce exposure and social normalization while allowing access.
- **Require buffer zones** around schools, colleges, and other youth-serving facilities.



PROMOTE ECONOMIC & SOCIAL JUSTICE

- **Prioritize equity in licensing applicants** (for example, residents of communities impacted by high drug incarceration rates).
- **Keep economic benefits** from cannabis legalization in communities most negatively affected by the "war on drugs."
- **Assure that that past cannabis convictions not be a barrier to moving into the legal market.** Such convictions have disproportionately affected the lives of so many men and women from black and Latino communities.
- **Revenue should fund health.** Invest tax revenue gained from legalized recreational cannabis in public health, prevention, substance abuse treatment, mitigating negative social impacts of the war on drugs, improved access to health care, and public education campaigns.



DO NOT WORSEN HEALTH INEQUITY

- **Place public health authorities in leadership roles** from the start of the regulatory process (something that took centuries for tobacco).
- **Avoid exacerbating existing health inequity** such as low birth weight, poor mental health outcomes, or lower high school graduation rates.
- **Inform vulnerable groups of the risks of use**, such as during pregnancy, mental health effects, and immigration risks. (Ex: 69% of cannabis dispensaries in Denver recommended cannabis for pregnancy-related morning sickness)



ENSURE APPROPRIATE REGULATIONS

- **Formulate edible safety regulations** including child-resistant packaging and restrictions on products which may be enticing to children.
- **Fully fund enforcement and oversight.** Enforcement regulations related to restaurant and environmental inspections must mirror inflation and industry growth.
- **Standardize and test packaging and potency.** Strict THC concentration regulations, particularly those relating to packaging, labeling and testing, must be in place before implementation.
- **Set a blood level operating limit for THC.** An active-THC blood level limit for operating a motor vehicle must be based on the best available evidence.
- **Prohibit misleading/unsubstantiated/anecdotal health claims** in all advertising and promotion of cannabis products.



MINIMIZE HARM AND INFORM THE PUBLIC

- **Minimize cannabis dependency and attendant health and social harms** by limiting potency of allowed products and aggressive marketing.
- **Require warning labels on any advertising & prominent graphic warnings on packages.** Prohibit therapeutic health claims for recreational cannabis products.
- **Use specialized business model (no food or other product sales) to reduce normalization.** Require prominent health warnings in stores and to consumers.
- **Extend smoke-free and vape-free air restrictions** to include cannabis.



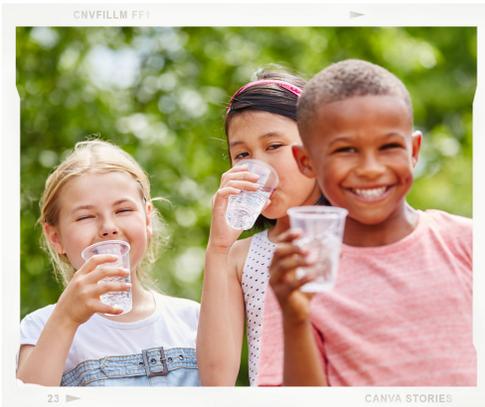
PROHIBIT A NEW TOBACCO-LIKE INDUSTRY

- **Avoid transferring control to outside investors** by favoring worker cooperatives/non-profits or similar structures.
- **Preserve local control** so communities can be more stringent (except as regards incarceration), up to and including, bans on all commercial activities.
- **Prohibit conflicts of interest** in regulatory bodies, advisory commissions, and for regulators and prescribers.



AVOID ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

- **Establish water usage limits and protections for surface and ground water** in the growing of cannabis to protect drinking water quality.
- **Require growers** to submit and implement air quality protection plans.
- **Regularly assess energy usage and emissions from cannabis cultivation** to assure that it does not negatively impact New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals.
- **Increase monitoring and enforcement of illegal growing operations on public lands** to reduce risk of environmental damage to wildlife and water caused by illegal pesticide use.
- **Monitor and establish restrictions on the conversion of agricultural farmland from food crops to cannabis cultivation** to assure legalization does not threaten food security.



ADVANCE EVIDENCE BASED SCIENCE

- **Fund surveillance and research efforts** to closely monitor potential benefits, risks, type of use, frequency of use and potency of marijuana used by all New Yorkers.
- **Encourage and fund the scientific study of health effects** among New Yorkers who use marijuana.
- **Establish a cannabis research review committee on the Public Health and Health Planning Council** that regularly assesses new evidence from other states and makes appropriate regulatory and statutory recommendations to assure that public health protections address any emerging public health threats related to cannabis sale or use.

