



State University Plaza, N501
353 Broadway, Albany, NY 12246
P:(518) 320-1288 | F: (518) 320-1555
www.sunysa.org

RESOLUTION 1617–NN

TO: Members of the General Assembly

FROM: Jordan Handler

DATE: November 12th 2016

SUBJECT: Endorsement of the Legalization and Deregulation of Marijuana

Action Requested

The proposed resolution would call upon the New York State government to legalize the sale and usage of recreational marijuana. The proposed resolution would also call upon the New York State government to loosen restrictions on the use and sale of medicinal marijuana.

Resolution

We recommend the SUNY Student Assembly adopt the following action:

Whereas in 2006, a study released in the Harm Reduction Journal found that from 1990 to 2002, the number of arrests pertaining to possession of marijuana rose from 369,000 to 616,000 in the United States; and,

Whereas that same study found that “only 1 in 18 of these arrests results in a felony conviction, with the rest either being dismissed or adjudicated as a misdemeanor, meaning that a substantial amount of resources, roughly \$4 billion per year for marijuana alone, is being dedicated to minor offenses”; and,

Whereas in 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimated that around 619,000 persons were arrested for possession of marijuana in the United States; and,

Whereas the data provided has proven that the past two decades of the War on Drugs has been a costly endeavor to deter criminal activity relating to marijuana that has not yielded dramatically positive results; and,

Whereas through the CORCRAFT Resolution and Ban the Box the State University of New York Student Assembly has advocated for the rights of people incarcerated in New York State in the previous session; and,

Whereas decriminalization, although appearing as a potential solution for those incarcerated without fully endorsing the use of marijuana, would still continue the racial disparity in punitive measures taken against those who partake in cannabis usage; and,

Whereas some state governments, including Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska have passed both legislation and referendums legalizing the use of marijuana in both a medicinal and recreational fashion; and,

Whereas the introduction and passage of both medicinal and recreational marijuana legalization referendums in a number of states including California, Maine, and Florida; and,

Whereas the legalization of the sale of recreational marijuana in Colorado on January 1, 2014 has led to two years of substantially increased tax revenue and a multibillion dollar industry that has generated new economic growth; and,

Whereas the economic results of Colorado's legalization have led to referendums on legalizing recreational marijuana usage and sale in five states in the 2016 elections; and,

Whereas reducing restrictions on the sale and use of medicinal marijuana in New York State would be beneficial to health services in New York State; and,

Whereas the legalization of the sale of recreational marijuana in New York State could lead to substantially increased tax revenue that could be used to reinvest in higher education and other public services; and,

Whereas legalizing the use of recreational marijuana in New York State would allow for law enforcement to shift their focus and resources to far more serious offenses; now, therefore be it,

Resolved that the SUNY Student Assembly call upon the New York State government to reduce restrictions in the use and sale of medicinal marijuana to provide for easier access to patients; and, be it

Resolved the SUNY Student Assembly endorse the legalization of the use and sale of recreational marijuana in New York State; and, be it,

Resolved that should recreational marijuana be legalized in New York State the SUNY Student Assembly call upon the New York State government to utilize at least 30% of all potential tax revenue to reinvest in the State University of New York system from the sale of recreational and medicinal marijuana; and finally, be it,

Background

<https://harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1477-7517-3-6>

<http://www.ibtimes.com/marijuana-legalization-2015-us-pot-arrests-increased-2014-1-every-45-seconds-fbi-data-2116938>

<http://ezproxy.purchase.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=45828212&site=ehost-live>

<http://ezproxy.purchase.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=103073016&site=ehost-live>

<http://taxfoundation.org/article/marijuana-legalization-and-taxes-lessons-other-states-colorado-and-washington>