

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN AND VILLAGE BOARDS OF NEW PALTZ, NEW YORK
SUPPORTING THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL
MARIJUANA

WHEREAS, legalizing marijuana is a social justice issue; and

WHEREAS millions of peaceful Americans have been arrested, imprisoned, fined, or otherwise needlessly criminalized and stigmatized, potentially for life, because of their use of marijuana; and

WHEREAS according to the ACLU, [marijuana arrests account for over half of all drug arrests in the United States, and the great majority of these arrests are for simple possession](#) and [despite roughly equal usage rates, Blacks are nearly four times more likely than whites to be arrested for marijuana](#), exacting a substantial toll on communities of color; and

WHEREAS [Eight states and the District of Columbia have already legalized recreational marijuana](#) and now regulate and tax marijuana like alcohol, and more states are likely to follow; and

WHEREAS Governor Cuomo has commissioned a [New York State Department of Health study](#) that will be soon realized and it is expected that this report will support the argument and provide a pathway towards legalizing recreational marijuana in our state; and

WHEREAS Americans' support of recreational marijuana legalization is at a [record high](#), including New Yorkers who want marijuana legalized, as demonstrated by the [April 2018 Siena Institute survey](#) which found that a majority of registered voters support the legalization of marijuana including 68% of those age 18 to 34; and

WHEREAS marijuana is not a gateway drug, as documented in the SUNY New Paltz Benjamin Center paper [The Marijuana Gateway Fallacy](#); and

WHEREAS time spent by police making marijuana arrests and in our courts processing these arrests is time not spent solving and addressing more serious crimes; and

WHEREAS marijuana criminalization draws away time and resources from law enforcement and substance abuse interventions that would be better spent elsewhere, in particular on the heroin and opioid epidemic; and

WHEREAS researchers have found [a link](#) between [marijuana legalization and decreased opioid use](#); and

WHEREAS marijuana tax revenues have exceeded projections in states that have already legalized recreational marijuana and it is estimated that a legal marijuana industry would generate an estimated minimum of [\\$132 billion in tax revenue and more than a million new jobs](#) across the United States in the next decade; and

WHEREAS marijuana for use by adults should never have been criminalized and we should act now to correct this wrong and all the many wrongs which have followed from it; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we the Town and Village Boards of New Paltz support the legalization of marijuana which would include allowing adults 21 years of age and older to be able to engage in the personal use of marijuana, the regulation of commercial marijuana-related activities, and taxation on the sale of marijuana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town and Village Boards of New Paltz support and endorse the “Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act,” the New York State legislation sponsored by Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes ([A03506B](#)) and State Senator Krueger ([S03040B](#)), as well as United State Senator Booker’s [Marijuana Justice Act](#), which our [Senator Gillibrand has already endorsed](#), both of which, if enacted, would alleviate many of the problems described above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Village Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, Congressman John Faso, Governor Andrew Cuomo, State Senator John Bonacic, State Assemblyman Kevin Cahill, County Executive Michael Hein, City of Kingston Mayor Steve Noble, Ulster County Legislative Chair Kenneth Ronk, Ulster County Legislator Hector Rodriguez, and Ulster County Legislator James Delaune.