



Bill Summary - Let the People Decide Maryland's Cannabis Policy

- This bill is a legislatively referred constitutional amendment. If passed by a 60% vote in both chambers, it would put the issue of whether to tax and regulate marijuana (cannabis) for adult use on the 2018 ballot. (This action could not be vetoed by the governor.)
- **Timeline:** If passed by the voters, the amendment would become part of the Maryland Constitution, and the General Assembly would debate and pass implementing legislation in 2019. After that, the comptroller would issue regulations, and then a licensing process would begin.

What does the amendment do?

- Immediately legalizes the possession of up to one ounce of cannabis, or up to five grams of concentrated cannabis (like hashish).
- Permits individuals to cultivate up to three mature cannabis plants in their own homes (and three seedlings), which is the same or less than is permitted in six of the eight states that tax and regulate cannabis for adult use.
- Requires the General Assembly and the comptroller to set up a system to regulate the cultivation, processing, and sale of cannabis under state law.
 - Requires that the businesses licensed be diverse, utilizing the findings of the industry disparity study, and that opportunities be created for small businesses.
 - Provides for local control of businesses, including limiting the number of businesses in a jurisdiction and deciding whether to allow social use in licensed businesses.
 - Requires that regulation prevent diversion and criminal involvement in the industry and keep cannabis away from youth.
 - Protects consumers by regulating the tracking, testing, packaging, labeling, and safe production and handling of cannabis.
- Requires the General Assembly to set a tax rate for cannabis that maximizes revenue for the state and discourages problematic use while minimizing the size of the illicit market.
- Allows existing medical cannabis businesses to sell to the adult use market (by mid-2019) while additional businesses are being licensed.

What *doesn't* the amendment do?

- It does not alter the laws against driving under the influence (of cannabis or any other substance).
- It does not require employers to allow employees to consume or possess cannabis in the workplace or work under the influence of cannabis, nor must landlords permit the cultivation or smoking of cannabis.
- It does not change the existing prohibition on consuming cannabis in public.
- It does not require anyone to violate federal law or take actions that would result in a loss of federal benefits.