



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Senator Cooney Completes Hearing on Accessibility, Enforcement, and Retail Sale of Adult-Use Cannabis

JEREMY COONEY November 1, 2023

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(ALBANY, NY) - NYS Senate Subcommittee on Cannabis, in partnership with Senate Standing Committees on Agriculture, Finance, and Investigations & Government Operations, conducted a hearing on the current state of the adult-use cannabis marketplace in New York.

Thirteen panels of more than thirty-five individuals ranging from regulatory agencies and law enforcement officials to cannabis farmers and retail-licensees provided on-the-record testimony. Testimony focused on enforcement operations undertaken by various agencies to counter illicit retail operations, efforts to support and expand social equity initiatives prioritized by New York State, and plans to bring more licensed retail operations online quickly following delays the state has faced thus far.

The hearing's purpose was to examine issues surrounding consumer accessibility and retail sale of legal, safe adult-use cannabis in New York. The findings from testimony given in-person, and written testimony submitted by dozens of individuals and industry experts will be utilized by legislators to examine potential 2024 legislative solutions to current challenges and delays facing those seeking to participate in the market through cultivation, processing or retail sales.

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We need to get New York's legal cannabis marketplace back on track," said NYS Senator Jeremy Cooney, Chair, NYS Senate Subcommittee on Cannabis. "Legislators can't just pass a bill and sit back—we need to fully participate in oversight activities, such as this week's hearing. We acknowledge the legal hurdles and start-up obstacles our state cannabis market has faced are complex, and we are exploring a thoughtful, multilayered legislative package that provides for clearer enforcement against those operating without a retail license, and support for social-equity licensees that brings new businesses online in an expedited and sustainable manner. Testimony presented both in-person and written will guide us toward our 2024 Cannabis Agenda, and positions us to begin the next chapter of our adult-use rollout."

"Our hearing was a very important opportunity to hear directly from New York farmers, growers, and cannabis business owners who have poured their resources into beginning our

state's cannabis industry and have risked their financial futures doing so," said **NYS Senator Michelle Hinchey**, *Chair of the Committee on Agriculture*. "Our commitment to the promise of a homegrown cannabis market founded on the principles of social equity and local economic growth remains unwavering. I thank my colleagues, the chairs of the Senate Committees on Cannabis, Finance, Investigations & Government Operations, for their partnership in convening this hearing and the work that's to come to establish greater transparency, communication, and guidance that will secure the successful implementation of New York's retail cannabis market."

"This hearing was an important opportunity to examine where we are in the process of rolling out New York's adult-use cannabis market," said **NYS Senator Liz Krueger**, *Chair of the Committee on Finance*. "It is invaluable for us in Albany to hear the experience of people on the ground, as well as to hear from the agencies charged with the massive undertaking of building this regulated industry from scratch. I look forward to digesting and discussing today's testimony as we all continue to work toward building equitable and sustainable adult-use and expanded medical cannabis markets."

"Monday's hearing played a pivotal role in addressing the pressing challenges that our retailers, processors, and consumers are facing within the adult-use cannabis sector. The stakeholders' robust testimonies brought forth invaluable insight," said **NYS Senator James Skoufis**, *Chair of the Committee on Investigations & Government Operations*. "I look forward to our ongoing collaboration, as we develop effective solutions to steer the cannabis market back on course."

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