



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Senator Cooney Named Co-Chair of Marijuana Task Force

JEREMY COONEY February 18, 2021

| ISSUE: **MARIJAUNA LEGALIZATION, BPHA**

(Rochester, NY) Senator Jeremy Cooney (Rochester-SD56) was named Co-Chair of the NYS Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus (BPHA)' Marijuana Task Force. **Senator Cooney** will co-chair the caucus' efforts to legalize recreational marijuana in the Senate. The co-chair in the Assembly is Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes (Buffalo-AD141).

The New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus (BPHA) is a group of lawmakers in both the Senate and the Assembly dedicated to empowering, educating, and advocating for communities of color.

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“It is long past due for New York to legalize recreational marijuana use for adults,” said Senator Cooney, “Black and brown New Yorkers have felt the harmful effects of over policing for low level drug offenses for decades; it’s time to right these historical wrongs. I am honored to serve as co-chair of this task force alongside Assembly Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes, and thank BPHA Chair and Assemblywoman Solages for this opportunity.”

“The Marijuana Task Force will play a critical role in ensuring that black and brown communities, who have been most negatively impacted by the War on Drugs, benefit from the legalization of recreational marijuana,” said **NYS Assembly Majority Leader Crystal**

Peoples-Stokes. “We must continue to do our part to advocate for criminal justice reform and community reinvestment. I look forward to co-chairing this committee with Senator Cooney and working on behalf of marginalized New Yorkers.”

“Cannabis legalization is an urgent matter of restorative justice. New York State must repair the damage done to Black and Brown communities,” said **Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Caucus Chair Michaelle Solages.** “We look forward to the leadership of Senator Cooney and Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes on the Caucus Marijuana Task-Force.”

Senator Cooney has spoken extensively about the need for equitable marijuana legislation in the past, and is a strong supporter of legalizing recreational marijuana in a way that reduces harm while creating new and diverse small businesses, quality statewide jobs, and stimulates both rural and urban economies.