



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara votes against legalizing marijuana: Highlights ongoing concerns being raised by law enforcement, educators, employers, public health experts, local governments and others

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 30, 2021

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Albany, N.Y., March 30—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) today voted against legislation to legalize recreational marijuana in New York State.

The legislation (S854/A1248) was approved by the Senate late today. The state Assembly is also approving the measure today. It has been agreed to and will be signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

In 2014, O'Mara was one of the first Republican state senators to publicly support the legalization of medical marijuana, however he says that too many legitimate concerns and warnings continue to be raised on the statewide legalization of recreational marijuana, including motorist safety, increasing marijuana's accessibility to young people under the age of 21, the drug's impact on the mental health of young users, and potential consequences for the workplace.

O'Mara said, "There are far too many loose ends in this legislation that have not been given a full public airing and that pose a troubling risk to safe roads, safe communities, safe schools, safe workplaces, and public health and safety overall. We continue to hear an outcry of warnings from police officers and law enforcement leaders, public health experts, local government leaders, educators, and employers. We should pay attention to these warnings and not move forward while there remain so many long-term uncertainties over the potential negative consequences."