



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Sen. Cooney Votes for Marijuana Legalization

JEREMY COONEY March 30, 2021

| ISSUE: **MARIJUANA REGULATION AND TAXATION ACT (MRTA), MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION, BPHA**

(Albany, NY) - Tonight, Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester) voted in support of the legalization of recreational marijuana for adult use. Senator Cooney is a co-sponsor of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA), which expands legal use of cannabis throughout the state and creates an equitable adult-use market. The legislation will direct tax revenues to communities, like Rochester, that have been targeted by the War on Drugs and expunge low level offenses from prior arrests.

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“This legislation is more than simply changing the rules around adult-use marijuana. Instead, it is a significant reinvestment in communities where we have caused past harm. We are prioritizing those most impacted by the War on Drugs and working to reverse the negative consequences caused by ineffective laws,” said Senator Cooney, co-chair of the Marijuana Task Force for the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus.

“Communities across New York, including in Rochester, deserve investment in the neighborhoods and people that suffered the most. The passage of the MRTA will create opportunities for communities like ours to benefit economically and socially from the legalization of marijuana.”

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"I thank Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for her leadership and my colleague, Senator Krueger, for carrying the legislation and her years of hard work. I am honored to have worked closely with my BPHA Marijuana Task Force co-chair and Assembly bill sponsor, Majority Leader Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes, who has consistently led on marijuana justice reform. As I begin my time in the Senate, these brilliant women serve as role models for bold, progressive leadership. For those of us who are new to the legislature like me, we stand upon their shoulders in our support of this landmark legislation to legalize marijuana."

Advocates share their support of the legislation

Vocal-NY

"The MRTA is long overdue. The MRTA is an opportunity to not only build revenue but build revenue that will be used to work towards repairing the harms that have been done to communities of color," **said Kim Smith, Statewide Organizer of Vocal-NY**, based in Rochester.

"We've been fighting this fight since 2010. The time is now to do this right."

"We thank Senator Cooney for his local advocacy and for the Democratic Majority for ensuring that the MRTA passes and passes with impacted communities in mind."

Drug Policy Alliance

"Make no mistake about it, New York has made history today by ensuring marijuana reform is on track to become the law of the land. Through the hard work of people impacted by prohibition, advocates and champion lawmakers, like the bill sponsors Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes and Senator Liz Krueger, and their colleague Senator Cooney who co-chairs the Marijuana Task Force of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus, New York has taken bold action to put a nail in the coffin of the war on drugs," **said Melissa Moore, New York State Director of the Drug Policy Alliance**. "This law comprehensively addresses the harms of overcriminalization and establishes one of the most ambitious

marijuana legalization programs in the nation. Through this sweeping legislation, New York is delivering reforms that place community reinvestment, social equity, and justice at the core of the law. At long last, victory is here. We urge Governor Cuomo to sign the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act into law immediately.”

RELATED LEGISLATION

2021-S854A

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Enacts the "marihuana regulation and taxation act"; repealer

January 05, 2021

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by [Liz Krueger](#)

Do you support this bill?