



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Letter on Illegal Cannabis Shops

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL September 9, 2022

| ISSUE: **LEGAL MARIJUANA, CANNABIS**

Dear Mayor Adams:

In March 2021, the Legislature took the long-overdue step of legalizing cannabis for recreational use, and the Office of Cannabis Management began accepting applications for retail licensees just last month. In the meantime, however, unscrupulous entities have taken advantage of New Yorkers' and visitors' confusion about the law to open dozens of illicit marijuana shops and trucks throughout the city. As elected officials whose districts include Manhattan Community District 4 and 5, we urge you to move swiftly in stopping these brazen businesses from selling unregulated products.

While adult use and possession of cannabis is now legal, it remains illegal to sell cannabis without a license, and no person or entity has been awarded a recreational license to sell in New York State. Nevertheless, Senator Hoylman's staff was able to identify over two dozen storefronts or mobile stores in his district that were purporting to sell cannabis to the public as if they had a valid license to do so. These stores are deceptive to consumers, hazardous to public health, cheating on their taxes, undermining the State's equity-based and legal cannabis rollout, and have little incentive to inspect IDs to ensure they are not selling to minors.

We appreciate the actions the Office of Cannabis Management has recently taken to put unlicensed cannabis retailers on notice and look forward to further discussions about how we can address this issue.

Sincerely,

Brad Hoylman, State Senator, District 27

Dick Gottfried, Assembly Member, District 75

Erik Bottcher, Council Member, District 3