



## Letter to Governor Shapiro

The Honorable Josh Shapiro  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Austin Davis  
Lieutenant Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
107 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

February 5, 2026

Dear Governor Shapiro,

On behalf of a broad coalition of Pennsylvania stakeholders, including civil liberties advocates and criminal justice reform leaders, we write to respectfully urge you to make adult-use cannabis legalization a top priority in 2026 and to convene formal five-party leadership discussions with the House and Senate to finally deliver this long-overdue reform.

Adult-use cannabis legalization has been a component of your budget proposal for the past three consecutive years, reflecting both sound fiscal policy and the clear will of the people of the Commonwealth. In addition, multiple bipartisan adult-use bills have been introduced in both chambers of the General Assembly, demonstrating that this issue transcends party lines and is ripe for action.

Yet Pennsylvania continues to fall further behind. As surrounding states implement adult-use cannabis programs, the Commonwealth is losing out on thousands of good-paying jobs, hundreds of millions in tax revenue, and significant economic development opportunities—benefits that are instead flowing across our borders. This competitive disadvantage grows more pronounced with each year of inaction.

Most critically, the failure to enact adult-use regulations and meaningful decriminalization continues to impose profound human costs. Thousands of Pennsylvanians are arrested, jailed, or otherwise entangled in the criminal justice system each year for non-violent cannabis offenses—conduct that is legal and unpunished in nearly every neighboring state. As Pennsylvania Attorney General in 2019, you stated that criminalizing adult-use marijuana “wastes scarce law enforcement resources, disproportionately impacts minority communities, and does not make us safer.”<sup>1</sup> You were right then, and that remains true today.

With the federal rescheduling of cannabis to Schedule III and adult-use legalization now enacted in more than half of the country, including all but one of Pennsylvania’s neighboring states, the Commonwealth is unmistakably behind the times. The momentum is clear, the policy case is well-established, and public support is overwhelming.

We respectfully ask that you include adult-use cannabis legalization in the five-party talks you referenced in your February 3rd budget address<sup>2</sup> to establish a clear, collaborative path forward in 2026. Doing so would align Pennsylvania with national trends, advance economic and workforce goals, and most importantly, end the unnecessary criminalization of Pennsylvanians for simple cannabis possession and use that the public overwhelmingly agrees should no longer be punished.

We stand ready to work with your administration and legislative leaders to help get this done.

Respectfully,

ACLU of Pennsylvania  
African American Chamber of Commerce  
Doctors for Drug Policy Reform  
Last Prisoner Project  
Law Enforcement Action Partnership  
Marijuana Policy Project (MPP)  
Pennsylvania Prison Society  
Public Defender Association of Pennsylvania  
Straight Ahead

**CC:**

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<https://penncapital-star.com/briefs/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-says-he-supports-legalizing-cannabis/>

2

<https://www.pa.gov/governor/newsroom/2026-press-releases/governor-shapiro-s-2026-27-budget-address-as-prepared-for-delive>