This year, dozens of cannabis policy reform bills were introduced in state legislatures across the country, and several major reforms appeared poised for passage as of early March. However, the coronavirus derailed most of the bills that had not already passed. A number of states paused their legislative sessions in order to promote social distancing to slow the spread of the pandemic, and many adjourned early. The National Conference of State Legislatures is doing excellent work tracking legislatures that are pausing or adjourning sessions, allowing remote voting, or otherwise modifying their schedules and procedures in times of the virus.

The below lists states where bills have been introduced to adopt new laws to legalize marijuana for adults, to adopt effective medical marijuana laws, or to replace possible jail time with fines for marijuana possession. Click on the state names below to learn more about efforts in your state and to take action in support of marijuana policy reform.

Of particular note:

- **Virginia's** legislature passed — and on May 21, 2020 Gov. Ralph Northam signed — a bill to decriminalize up to an ounce of marijuana, imposing a $25 fine instead of possible jail time.
- In **Vermont**, the Senate and House approved different versions of S. 54, a bill to legalize and regulate marijuana sales (possession and cultivation is already legal). A conference committee was appointed to harmonize the bills. The House speaker said the legislature will continue its work on the issue in August.
- In **New York**, for the second year in a row, Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) proposed including legalization in the state's budget. However, the budget ultimately did not include it. It is unlikely — but possible — that legalization will be taken up this year.
- **Connecticut's** governor sponsored a legalization bill for the first time in 2020. However, the legislative session was also disrupted by virus-related precautions and has adjourned.
- **Alabama's** Senate and **Kentucky's** House of Representatives both approved medical cannabis bills, but both were derailed by the virus.

**Only 23 states allow citizen-initiated ballot initiatives**, meaning in most states the only way to reform marijuana laws is via the legislature. With polls showing that 67% of Americans support making marijuana use legal and around 90% support allowing medical marijuana, lawmakers are increasingly getting the message that constituents want them to act on sensible and humane marijuana policies.

In times of this pandemic, it is all the more apparent that finite government resources shouldn’t be wasted on cannabis prohibition. And states could use the economic growth and tax revenue that come with marijuana legalization in these challenging times.