

# 2022 Cannabis Policy Reform Legislation

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Because [less than half of U.S. states allow citizen-initiated ballot measures](#), in most states, the only way to reform cannabis laws is via the state's legislature. Polls show that [68% of Americans support making cannabis use legal](#) and around [90% support allowing medical cannabis](#), but lawmakers lag far behind the public.

Only 19 states have legalized cannabis for adults, and only seven of those laws have been enacted by state legislatures (in a seventh state, New Jersey, the legislature itself referred the issue to voters). Meanwhile, 13 states are even further behind the times — lacking even a medical cannabis law. And 19 states continue to jail their residents for even simple possession of cannabis.

One legalization law and one medical cannabis law have made it past the finish line this year: Gov. Dan McKee (D) signed the Rhode Island Cannabis Act to legalize, regulate, and tax cannabis in Rhode Island on May 25. On February 2, Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves (R) signed into law SB 2095, sponsored by Sen. Kevin Blackwell, to restore voters' will by creating a medical cannabis program. (The court had thrown out a voter-enacted medical cannabis law, along with the entire voter initiative process.)

Meanwhile, the Maryland legislature referred a simple state constitutional amendment to voters that will appear on the November ballot. The legislature also enacted companion legislation that will set up first steps toward legalization if voters approve the simple constitutional amendment.

In Delaware, a supermajority of legislators passed a simple legalization bill (HB 371), but Gov. John Carney (D) vetoed the bill. Several legislators who had initially voted in favor of HB 371 changed their vote on the override, causing it to fall short and be defeated.

Dozens of other states considered bills to advance sensible and compassionate state cannabis policies.

Here is a list of states where bills were considered in 2022 to legalize cannabis for adults, to decriminalize cannabis (i.e., by issuing a fine-only ticket for simple possession), or to legalize medical cannabis.