

News Release  
For Immediate Use  
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## Elected officials urge regulation of marijuana like alcohol

A growing number of Iowa elected officials publicly support regulating marijuana like Iowa regulates alcohol for adult use. The names of 39 state and local elected officials (below) who support this reform were released at a news conference on Wednesday, January 6.

“It’s time to reform Iowa’s outdated marijuana laws,” said **Iowa City Mayor Bruce Teague**. “Laws that regulate the adult use of marijuana in a way similar to Iowa’s alcohol laws will make our state a better, freer, more just place to live.”

The growing support from Iowa legislators and local elected officials for reforming Iowa’s marijuana laws follows an increase in support from Iowans generally. A March 2020 Iowa Poll found that a majority of (53 percent) of Iowans support legalization.\*

“Iowa’s laws criminalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana are irrational and inconsistently enforced, and a conviction or even an arrest carry numerous direct and collateral consequences that are far out of proportion to the alleged criminal conduct,” said **State Representative Mary Wolfe (D) Clinton**.

Fifteen states, home to one out of three Americans currently allow adults to legally use marijuana. Last November, voters in South Dakota legalized the adult use of marijuana. Illinois, another Iowa neighbor, legalized marijuana for adults last year.

“Iowa taxpayers currently spend millions of dollars a year to punish adults for marijuana use. These efforts are strongly biased against Iowans of color and must be reformed,” said **State Representative Ross Wilburn (D) Ames**. A 2019 study by the ACLU found that while Black Iowans use marijuana at the same rate as White Iowans, they are more than 7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession. \*\*

“The facts are that marijuana is less toxic and less addictive than alcohol,” said **State Senator Jackie Smith, (D) Sioux City**. “States that legalized the adult use of marijuana have created thousands of jobs and have refocused law enforcement resources on more serious problems.” “Iowa should do the same.”

Iowa elected officials can join this effort and the view the most recent list of Iowa elected officials who support regulating marijuana like alcohol here. <http://bit.ly/IowaMarijuanaReform>

\* “Iowa Poll: Most Iowans support expanding medicinal cannabis and legalizing recreational marijuana” <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2020/03/15/iowa-poll-iowans-support-legal-recreational-expanded-medical-marijuana/5026342002/>

\*\* “Iowa Ranks Among the Worst States in Racial Disparities for Marijuana Arrests: <https://www.aclu-ia.org/en/press-releases/iowa-ranks-among-worst-states-racial-disparities-marijuana-arrests>

more

## Iowa Elected Officials for Marijuana Reform – January 6, 2020

Cedar Rapids City Council member, Patrick Loeffler  
Cedar Rapids City Council member, Dale Todd  
Cedar Rapids City Council member, Ashley Vanorny  
Coralville City Council member, Meghann Foster  
Des Moines City Council member, Connie Boesen  
Des Moines City Council member, Bill Gray  
Des Moines City Council member, Josh Mandelbaum  
Des Moines City Council member, Carl Voss  
Iowa City Mayor, Bruce Teague  
Iowa City Council member, John Thomas  
Johnston City Council member, Scott Syroka  
Waterloo City Council member, Jonathan Grieder

Black Hawk County Supervisor, Chris Schwartz  
Johnson County Supervisor, Royceann Porter  
Johnson County Supervisor, Rod Sullivan  
Linn County Supervisor, Stacey Walker  
Polk County Supervisor, Angela Connolly  
Polk County Supervisor, Matt McCoy

Representative Ako Abdul-Samad, Des Moines  
Representative Marti Anderson, Des Moines  
Representative Liz Bennett, Cedar Rapids  
Representative-Elect Christina Bohannon, Iowa City  
Representative Tracy Ehler, Cedar Rapids  
Representative Ruth Ann Gaines, Des Moines  
Representative Kristen Running-Marquardt, Cedar Rapids  
Representative Mary Mascher, Iowa City  
Representative Brian Meyer, Des Moines  
Representative Jo Oldson, Des Moines  
Representative Ras Smith, Waterloo  
Representative Art Staed, Cedar Rapids  
Representative Sharon Steckman, Mason City  
Representative Kristin Sunde, West Des Moines  
Representative Ross Wilburn, Ames  
Representative Mary Wolfe, Clinton

Senator Joe Bolcom, Iowa City  
Senator Bill Dotzler, Waterloo  
Senator Janet Petersen, Des Moines  
Senator Jackie Smith, Sioux City  
Senator-Elect Sarah Trone Garriott, Windsor Heights

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