



The Most Dangerous Thing about Marijuana in Wisconsin is that it is Illegal

By Representative Sargent, 48th Assembly District

When I first ran for office, I would have never imagined myself introducing legislation to legalize marijuana. However, after listening to heart wrenching stories and experiences about the negative implications that the prohibition of marijuana has had on our state, I knew that action was needed. Far too many lives and communities have been damaged by out of date and backwards cannabis policies, and we must take this important and necessary step towards rectifying these damages. The simple truth is, the most dangerous thing about marijuana in Wisconsin is that it is illegal.

Imagine being unable to obtain a job, to provide for your family, or to live your life in normalcy because you have a non-violent minor marijuana offense on your record. Even worse, imagine still being incarcerated because of it. Imagine being told that the only medicine that works for your health condition makes you a felon. Or, simply even imagine having to watch your own child suffer from a debilitating illness, and being unable to access the medicine that they need to manage their pain. Imagine being singled out due to the color of your skin, and being charged with a marijuana related offense at [6x the rate](#) of your white counterpart. Imagine living in constant fear that your use of a plant, used in similar rates to that of tobacco and alcohol and with far less addictive and risky properties, could change the outcome of your entire life. For far too many people here in Wisconsin, and perhaps for many of you reading this, these scenarios are a stark reality.

The people of Wisconsin have said loud and clear that the prohibition of marijuana is not working– the recent November election showed that through [referenda across the state](#) voters were in overwhelming support of legalization. Additionally, in a recent [Marquette Law School Poll](#), over 60% of Wisconsinites believe that all marijuana sales should be taxed and regulated like alcohol sales. With this momentous and growing support for full legalization, it is clear that the people are ready for truly pragmatic and common sense action. By legalizing recreational marijuana in Wisconsin we will open the door to [countless family-sustaining jobs](#), have the means to regulate and tax marijuana to provide [abundant economic stimulus for our state](#) (no tax incentives needed), and address the massive and egregious [racial disparities in marijuana-related arrest rates](#). Wisconsin must act now in order to provide real relief for ordinary people across Wisconsin.

I am proud to reintroduce my bill to fully legalize marijuana in the state of Wisconsin this session, LRB-0154. More information about my bill, including a FAQs page, can be found by visiting: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/48/sargent/marijuana-page/>

This bill is not of my own individual doing, and does not cater to the opinions of legislators here inside of the Capitol building or any other special interests, but is truly an accumulation of the voices of the people of Wisconsin and works to represent and benefit all Wisconsinites. The legalization of cannabis in Wisconsin will bring much needed criminal justice reform, medicinal relief, and economic boon to our state. I will continue working tirelessly in my efforts, and I invite you to join me in the fight to [legalize opportunity](#) in our state.