



Understanding Michigan's SB 631: Decriminalizing Entheogens

Overview of Senate Bill 631

- Senate Bill 631 would amend Michigan's public health code to remove criminal penalties for the individual—and non-remunerated—use, possession, manufacture, or delivery of several entheogenic plants or fungi, including psilocybin, psilocyn, dimethyltryptamine (DMT), ibogaine and mescaline.
- Senate Bill 631 would retain current prohibitions on the commercial manufacture and sale of entheogenic plants and fungi.

Promise of Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy

- Despite the traditional spiritual use of entheogens across many societies, the War on Drugs stifled important research into the potential therapeutic use of psychedelics starting in the 1970s.
 - Recently there is a renewed wave of international interest in research in the use of psychedelics in areas like psychiatry, neuroscience, and the treatment of mental health conditions like addiction, anxiety, depression, PTSD and other disorders.
- The US Food and Drug Administration is helping to fast track the approval of psychedelics for use in serious mental health conditions in situations in which clinical results demonstrate major improvements over current treatment regimes.
 - In 2018 and 2019 the FDA designated psilocybin as a “breakthrough therapy” for both major depressive disorder and severe treatment-resistant depression.
- In October 2021, the National Institutes of Health awarded the first federal grant for psychedelics research in 50 years, funding Johns Hopkins to study the use of psilocybin for tobacco addiction.

Policy Implications

- SB 631 is limited in scope, decriminalizing certain entheogens that are showing tremendous promise in the therapeutic treatment of a range of neurological and mental health conditions, with minimal risk to both public safety and public health.
- Voters in Detroit and Ann Arbor have enacted similar local decriminalization ordinances in recent years, with several additional Michigan cities considering similar measures.
- Unlike Michigan's experience with legalizing medical and adult use recreational cannabis markets, SB 631 would not legalize a broader market for entheogens or other psychedelics.

DRUG POLICY PROJECT CONTACTS

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