

Idaho State to Legalize Cannabis?

Efforts continue to be made to legalize Idaho medical marijuana, as marijuana legalization spreads across the US. Recreational marijuana is currently legal in 10 states, while medical marijuana is legal in 33 states. Utah and Missouri are the [most recent states](#) to have voted to legalize medical marijuana. Reports show that [62% of Americans](#) support cannabis legalization.

Despite its proximity to California and other marijuana-friendly states, efforts made by the Idaho Medical Marijuana Association to legalize cannabis in Idaho have been [consistently frustrated](#). President Tesla Gillespie says that this is mostly due to the organization's lack of organization, experience, and funding. Hunting down the necessary and relevant amount of signatures has also been an issue, which are needed for the initiative to reach the Idaho ballot. Neither medical or recreational marijuana is legal in Idaho at this time, and possession of the drug is classified as felony.

Meanwhile, the 2018 Idaho Medical Marijuana Act expressed concerns about street-dispensary pop ups and the lack of medical marijuana resource providers. Even if ballot voters were to pass Idaho medical marijuana legalization, Legislature could still repeal it. State medical programs are also protected under federal law.

However, moves to test the medical potentials of marijuana are being made, especially in the use of CBD oil to treat seizures, and last year Idaho's Department of Health and Welfare were pushing for lawmakers to approve \$26,800 of test funding. As for a vote on CBD oil legalization in general, House Minority Leader Mat. Erpelding says he is working with Idaho Legislature's more conservative Republican members to bring it about, but [admits that](#) "our path is really difficult because we have the same governor in place."

Recreational marijuana, on the other hand, is out of the question. Assistant House Majority Leader Brent Crane has stated "absolutely not," and mentioned that the states that have expanded to this use "have seen significant issues with respect to the enforcement of it. Fatalities are up. The societal cost has been significant."

Erpelding, however, sees hope for the legalization of Idaho medical marijuana. He argues that the state should learn to utilize it effectively as a medicine, and to follow the example set by other states.

The efforts of organizations such as Idaho Medical Marijuana Association reflects the growing call for reduced government control around what many people consider a rightful source of medicine and healthcare. In the meantime, a positive addition to the Idaho Medical Marijuana

Act states that its purpose is to “is to protect from arrest, prosecution, property forfeiture, and criminal and other penalties, those patients who use marijuana to alleviate suffering from qualifying medical conditions, as well as their physicians, primary caregivers, and those who are authorized to produce marijuana for medical purposes and to facilitate the availability of marijuana in Idaho for legal medical use.”

Given the trajectory of other state laws, it is likely that Idaho’s legislation will become more lenient in the future. Though this will not happen without strategic implementation and regulation surrounding the use of the drug, medicinal or otherwise.