

Ending the Illicit Marijuana Market in Washington

WHEREAS the voters of Washington approved I-502 in 2012 to tax and regulate marijuana for adult use;

WHEREAS marijuana has been a popular substance in our communities for decades worth billions of dollars in annual sales;

WHEREAS marijuana sales have traditionally benefited illegal dealers and violent drug cartels;

WHEREAS the foundation for the success of I-502 rests upon eliminating illegal marijuana sales by opening taxed and regulated marijuana retail stores in our communities;

WHEREAS the WA State Liquor and Cannabis Board recently estimated that the state's regulated marijuana stores have captured as little as 50% of the pre-existing illegal marijuana market;

WHEREAS dozens of cities and counties across Washington have banned regulated marijuana stores;

WHEREAS these bans on regulated marijuana stores have cut off 25% of the state's population from having local access to the legal marijuana market;

WHEREAS city bans on regulated marijuana stores are the single largest factor preventing greater elimination of the illegal marijuana trade;

WHEREAS legal marijuana sales in Washington are currently generating over \$300 million in annual tax revenues;

WHEREAS diverting 100% of the existing illegal marijuana sales to the regulated and taxed retail stores could potentially double the state's annual marijuana revenues;

WHEREAS illegal marijuana dealers sell to minors and often carry other drugs than just marijuana;

WHEREAS cities that allow marijuana stores receive a portion of the state's marijuana revenues;

WHEREAS many thousands of people across our state with severe medical conditions rely upon access to medical marijuana for maintaining their quality of life;

WHEREAS banning regulated marijuana stores forces some of these medical patients to the illegal marijuana dealers; and

WHEREAS the existence of regulated marijuana retail stores in cities across the nation has not caused any problems for local communities or caused any significant increase in marijuana use;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we oppose the banning of legal marijuana stores by local jurisdictions, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, for all of the above reasons, we call upon council members in any jurisdiction with a ban on regulated marijuana retail stores to urgently replace those bans with local zoning and regulation.

Adopted April 24, 2018, by the King County Democratic Central Committee

Previously adopted by the 32nd Dist. Democrats