



TOPICS IN THE NEWS:

The P(l)ot Thickens: The Legalization of Marijuana in Michigan

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INTRODUCTION

At a [rally in Ann Arbor in December 1971](#), John Lennon's and other celebrity's impassioned pleas helped persuade the Michigan Supreme Court to rule that the 1952 law used to imprison John Sinclair, a political activist convicted of possession of marijuana, was cruel and unusual in its length of sentence and that it erroneously classified marijuana as a narcotic, and thus was unconstitutional. Hence, a new marijuana law was passed to replace it. That ruling came on March 9, 1972. The new law did not take effect until April 1, 1972, resulting in 22 days in which marijuana was legal in Michigan. Talk about the ultimate grass roots effort!

Since that new law in 1972, Michigan's marijuana legislation has continued to evolve, the first significant change in law occurring with passage of [voter-initiated Proposal 1](#) in 2008, legalizing the medical use of marijuana. Ten years later, in the 2018 General Election, another [voter-initiated proposal](#) passed, providing for the recreational marijuana use. The new law took effect in Dec. 2018, decriminalizing possession of marijuana and setting a one-year period for state government to promulgate rules for licensing a recreational marijuana-based retail industry. On December 1, 2019, the first licensed marijuana retail establishments opened in Michigan ... completing the circle, John Sinclair made the first purchase.

The road to legalized recreational marijuana has not been a smooth trip; there have been hurdles to address along the way. As Michigan's recreational marijuana industry marks its first anniversary, this issue takes a broad look at its legislative history, policy implications, economic impact, and legislative trends across the country.

If you need assistance accessing any of these resources or need more information, please contact the Library of Michigan at librarian@michigan.gov or by phone at 517-335-1477.

MARIJUANA AND FEDERAL LAW

- [The Schedule I Status of Marijuana](#), *Congressional Research Service*, updated Sept. 11, 2020.
- [The MORE Act: House Plans Historic Vote on Federal Marijuana Legalization](#), *Congressional Research Service*, Nov. 25, 2020.
- [Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act \(MORE\) of 2019](#), Report of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Nov. 27, 2020.
- ["House approves decriminalizing marijuana; bill to stall in Senate"](#), NPR, Dec. 4, 2020.

*Undocumented, but makes for good copy

MARIJUANA AND MICHIGAN LAW

- ["When marijuana was legal in Michigan: 22 days in 1972"](#), *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 8, 2018.
- ["Local governments across Michigan vexed over how to handle legal weed"](#) Bridge Michigan, Oct. 9, 2018.
- ["Michigan's cannabis laws for dummies: the dos and don'ts of dope"](#), Detroit Metro Times, Apr. 17, 2019.
- [It's all in a name, marijuana v marihuana in Michigan](#), Michigan Marijuana Regulatory Agency (MRA), 2021.
- [Adult-Use Establishments](#), Michigan Marijuana Regulatory Agency (MRA), 2021.
- [Marijuana in Michigan](#), Michigan Municipal League, 2021.

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA IN MICHIGAN - ONE YEAR LATER

- [Michigan recreational marijuana Industry marks first anniversary of legal sales](#), Michigan Radio, Dec. 1, 2020.
- [Craig Fahle Podcast: the one-year anniversary of recreational cannabis in Michigan](#), Deadline Detroit, Dec. 22, 2020.
- ["One year of recreational cannabis: an industry flying high"](#), *Hour Detroit*, Dec. 2020, pp.37-43.
- ["Michigan's recreational marijuana industry celebrates birthday after 'incredible' first year"](#), *Ann Arbor News*, Dec. 2, 2020. (Available with Library of Michigan library card)

ONGOING ISSUES - DECRIMINALIZATION, ECONOMIC IMPACT, PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

- ["Decriminalization could help ease the nation's drug epidemic, but the devil is in the details"](#), *STAT*, Nov. 17, 2020.
- ["House Passes Bill To Decriminalize Marijuana For Federal Purposes"](#), *Forbes*, Dec. 4, 2020.
- ["Michigan's First Cannabis Lounge Is the Chill Alternative to Bars"](#), *Leafly*, Feb. 19, 2019.
- ["Banking Challenges for Michigan's Cannabis Industry"](#), *SFA State Notes*, Winter 2020.
- [Lake Superior State University opens cannabis research center](#), *Grand Rapids Press*, Feb. 24, 2020.
- [The Market for and Economic Impact of the Adult-Use Recreational Marijuana Industry in Michigan](#), *Michigan State University Product Center Food-Ag-Bio*, March 2020.
- [As sales of recreational marijuana soar in Michigan, other parts of industry struggle, other parts of industry struggle](#), Michigan Radio, Dec. 9, 2019.
- [Cannabis and Public Health: New and Persisting Challenges for Policymakers](#), UC Center Sacramento, recorded talk, Nov. 12, 2020.

COMPARISONS - MARIJUANA LAW AND POLICY IN OTHER STATES

- [Marijuana Deep Dive](#), National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 2021.
- [Marijuana Policy Project](#), Marijuana Policy Project (MPP), 2021.
- ["As More Red States Legalize Marijuana, Some Officials Try to Nip It in the Bud"](#), *Kaiser Health News*, Dec. 9, 2020.