

QUESTION

8

Prohibit Retail Sale of Adult Recreational Use Marijuana

IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

This question asks voters whether to repeal the law that legalized the sale and use of recreational marijuana, and whether to create civil penalties for the possession of marijuana.

YES

A YES VOTE WOULD...

Nullify existing state statutes that allow for the sale, possession, and use of marijuana — doing away with the cannabis tax rules for local governments. It would also create a \$100 civil fine for possessing more than one but less than two ounces of marijuana in Massachusetts.

PROPOSERS CLAIM

- A Mass General Brigham study published in 2025 found that after legalization, rates of cannabis use and cannabis-related disorders disproportionately increased among adolescents who sought psychiatric emergency services.
- Recreational legalization has increased drugged driving incidents.
- Tax revenue from recreational marijuana sales does not make up for the increased costs on health care, lost productivity, and crime.

The Coalition for a Healthy Massachusetts, a group backed by the national anti-legalization organization Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), is the main group advocating for this ballot initiative. SAM Action Inc., which is a 501(c)(4), is not required to disclose its donors.

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

- Prior to the 2016 ballot measure that voters passed to legalize recreational marijuana, medicinal marijuana was available to residents with a written certification. Those possessing one ounce or less of the drug without certification faced civil penalties while those who possessed more than an ounce faced criminal penalties.
- Smart Approaches to Marijuana is funding a similar repeal effort in Maine.
- If passed, the ballot question would allow retail marijuana stores to either apply to become medical dispensaries or sell their inventory to one. The Cannabis Control Commission would remain to regulate medical marijuana sales.

NO

A NO VOTE WOULD...

Leave in place the existing law, which established the regulated industry of recreational marijuana cultivators and retailers. Currently, the Cannabis Control Commission has statutory authority to develop and enforce regulations of the sale and use of recreational marijuana in Massachusetts.

OPPONENTS CLAIM

- Repealing the legalization of recreational cannabis would push marijuana consumers into the illicit market where the drug would not be regulated.
- The question would dismantle an industry that grossed more than \$1.6 billion in 2025 and generated nearly \$300 million in state tax revenue in fiscal year 2025, according to the Cannabis Control Commission.
- The industry also supports 20,000 jobs across Massachusetts.

Stop the Repeal, a coalition of marijuana industry leaders, is the main group opposing this ballot measure. The campaign is backed by the Committee to Protect Cannabis Regulation, a group of cannabis businesses and trade groups that formed to oppose the ballot initiative.