http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/marijuana-wi-present-s5.jpg



Bill would fully legalize cannabis, establish community reinvestment grants, provide a path towards expungement, and bolster agriculture.

SOUTH BELOIT - On Wednesday, Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) introduced LRB 4361, to legalize cannabis in Wisconsin for adult responsible usage and medical purposes. The bill is similar to the Governor's budget proposal by investing about half the tax revenue made from sales into community reinvestment grants to help underserved communities and communities wronged by the prohibition of cannabis.

Senator Agard released the following statement:



"I've said this countless times - the most dangerous thing about cannabis is that it remains illegal in Wisconsin. That's why I am reintroducing legislation to legalize cannabis and tax it like we already do alcohol. The fact that I have introduced this bill for the past 8 years with no public hearing is appalling. It is reckless that the Republicans refuse to allow Wisconsinites to speak on this issue.

"The seeds we plant today will dictate the future of our state. Setting Wisconsin up for social and

economic success for years to come should be a priority for all legislators. This bill is one way to do that - through the projected $165 million per year in revenue from legal cannabis, we could help our state and underserved communities prosper. Through reinvestment grants, we can begin to right past wrongs through the over-enforcement of outdated drug policies. Additionally, LRB-4361 will provide a path forward for those who have been most harmed by the prohibition of cannabis. We need to take a fresh look at this blooming industry and take advantage of many positives it can provide to our state.



“Not only will this proposal allow our state to right past wrongs, it will also open countless doors to our farmers and agricultural sector to participate in a growing industry. Wisconsin can no longer ignore the cannabis industry - we are losing out on millions of dollars and family sustaining jobs to our neighboring states. We are losing money that we could be reinvesting to help support our friends and neighbors and make our state a place where people want to live, work, play, raise a family, and plant their roots.

“Additionally, cannabis legalization does not make our communities unsafe. Studies have found that overall crime has not soared in states that have legalized. Cannabis legalization makes our communities safer for our black and brown neighbors. Black people are four times as likely to be charged with a cannabis offense compared to their white counterparts, despite usage rates being largely the same. It is time we begin to flip the script because it is morally the right thing to do.

“Wisconsin is ready for legal cannabis. Communities most affected by over-enforced and outdated drug policies are ready. Our farmers are ready. Let’s do this together - let’s legalize cannabis.”