

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 420 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY RABB, BURGOS, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, KENYATTA,
MADDEN, McNEILL, PARKER, SANCHEZ, SCHLOSSBERG, KINSEY,
WAXMAN, DELLOSO, PROBST, KHAN, FLEMING AND CERRATO,
MAY 30, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MAY 30, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States, President of the
2 United States, Attorney General of the United States, Drug
3 Enforcement Administration and Department of Health and Human
4 Services to remove cannabis as a Schedule I controlled
5 substance under the Controlled Substances Act.

6 WHEREAS, The Controlled Substances Act (Public Law 91-513, 84
7 Stat. 1236) was enacted by the 91st Congress and became
8 effective May 1, 1971; and

9 WHEREAS, Under the Controlled Substances Act, a Schedule I
10 controlled drug or other substance is considered to have a high
11 potential for abuse and dependence, no currently accepted
12 medical use in treatment and a lack of accepted safety for use
13 under medical supervision; and

14 WHEREAS, Cannabis is currently a Schedule I controlled drug
15 or other substance under the Controlled Substances Act; and

16 WHEREAS, There are no exceptions under Federal law for the
17 application of cannabis for medicinal purposes even if the use
18 is sanctioned by State law; and

1 WHEREAS, As of March 2023, a total of 38 states and four
2 territories regulate cannabis for the recommendation,
3 registration and dispensing for approved patients; and

4 WHEREAS, As of June 2022, at least 21 states, two territories
5 and the District of Columbia have enacted legislation to
6 regulate cannabis for adult use; and

7 WHEREAS, Scientific research has shown cannabis may be
8 helpful in treating symptoms of epilepsy, nausea and vomiting
9 associated with cancer chemotherapy, loss of appetite and weight
10 loss associated with HIV/AIDS, chronic pain, multiple sclerosis,
11 anxiety, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome,
12 Tourette syndrome, posttraumatic stress disorder and sleep
13 disorder; and

14 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has called for
15 cannabis to be removed from the most restrictive category of the
16 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961; and

17 WHEREAS, The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs
18 voted to reclassify cannabis from the strict Schedule IV
19 classification of the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs that
20 includes dangerous and highly addictive drugs such as heroin;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Under the Controlled Substances Act, other Schedule
23 I controlled substances include heroin, and Schedule II
24 controlled substances include cocaine, methamphetamine,
25 hydrocodone, oxycodone and fentanyl; and

26 WHEREAS, In 2021 alone, more than 70,000 Americans died from
27 drug overdoses involving synthetic opioids, and the latest
28 provisional drug overdose death counts through May 2022 suggest
29 an acceleration of overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids
30 during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

1 WHEREAS, Rescheduling cannabis will establish an important
2 step in harmonizing Federal and State policy to improve public
3 health, reduce criminal justice expenditures, raise tax revenue
4 and usher in economic growth; and

5 WHEREAS, Removing cannabis as a Schedule I controlled
6 substance will facilitate medical research, ensure patient
7 access and remove Federal prohibitions; and

8 WHEREAS, Billions in taxpayer dollars are spent every year in
9 Federal expenditures attributable to cannabis prohibition
10 enforcement in the criminal justice system; and

11 WHEREAS, Federal mandatory minimum sentencing laws for drug
12 offenses result in nonviolent cannabis offenders serving long
13 sentences often disproportionate to their crime; and

14 WHEREAS, The United States Attorney General can and should
15 initiate a review process to consider available evidence and
16 change a controlled substance's schedule classification; and

17 WHEREAS, Under this action, the Drug Enforcement
18 Administration, in conjunction with the United States Department
19 of Health and Human Services, would be directed to carry out a
20 review process to reschedule a controlled substance, such as
21 when the Drug Enforcement Administration rescheduled hydrocodone
22 combination products or opioid-based prescription painkillers
23 from Schedule III to Schedule II in 2014; and

24 WHEREAS, Congress has the authority to pass a law that
25 changes or restricts a controlled substance's schedule
26 classification; therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
28 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United
29 States, President of the United States, Attorney General of the
30 United States, Drug Enforcement Administration and Department of

1 Health and Human Services to remove cannabis as a Schedule I
2 controlled substance under the Controlled Substances Act; and be
3 it further

4 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
5 the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each
6 member of Congress from Pennsylvania, and to the President of
7 the United States, the Attorney General of the United States,
8 the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the
9 Secretary of Health and Human Services.