

INTRODUCED: April 5, 2021

Expedited Consideration

A RESOLUTION No. 2021-R021

To declare vigorous support for and urge the General Assembly promptly to approve amendments recommended by the Governor to legislation legalizing the simple possession of up to one ounce of marijuana that are intended to promote equity for Richmond residents and other Virginia citizens disproportionately affected by the enforcement of laws prohibiting marijuana possession.

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Patrons – Mr. Jones, Ms. Lambert, Vice President Robertson and Ms. Trammell

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Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney

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PUBLIC HEARING:

AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, House Bill 2312 and Senate Bill 1406 (the “Legislation”) as passed by the 2021 General Assembly of Virginia (the “General Assembly”) during its Special Session I would legalize the simple possession of certain amounts of marijuana; establish a Cannabis Equity Reinvestment Board and a Cannabis Equity Reinvestment Fund to directly address the impact of economic disinvestment, violence, and historical overuse of criminal justice responses to community and individual needs by providing resources to support local design and control of community-based responses to such impacts; and make other changes to the laws of the

AYES: 8 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 1

ADOPTED: APR 5 2021 REJECTED:  STRICKEN:

Commonwealth of Virginia intended to alleviate the historical disproportionate impact of the enforcement of marijuana possession laws; and

WHEREAS, prompted by findings such as those of a November 16, 2020, report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission showing racial disparities in marijuana law enforcement in every Virginia locality where there was sufficient data to make an assessment, the Governor of Virginia (the “Governor”) has recommended amendments to the Legislation as passed by the General Assembly to (i) allow adults to legally possess up to one ounce of cannabis, without intent to distribute, beginning July 1, 2021, (ii) allow for expungement and sealing of criminal records on marijuana to begin as soon as state agencies are able to do so, and (iii) simplify the criteria for when such records can be sealed, among other changes intended to increase the Legislation’s equitable impact on disproportionately affected members of racial and language minority groups and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in the city of Richmond and around the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the residents of the city of Richmond that the Council of the City of Richmond vigorously support, and urge that the General Assembly promptly approve, these amendments recommended by the Governor, which are intended to promote equity for Richmond residents and other citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia disproportionately affected by the enforcement of laws prohibiting marijuana possession;

NOW, THEREFORE,

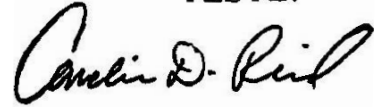
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby declares its vigorous support for, and urges that the General Assembly promptly approve, amendments recommended by the Governor to the Legislation that are intended to promote equity for Richmond residents and other citizens of the Commonwealth

of Virginia disproportionately affected by the enforcement of laws prohibiting marijuana possession.

**A TRUE COPY:**

**TESTE:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carlin D. Reil". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**City Clerk**



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Haskell Brown, Interim Richmond City Attorney  
Richmond Office of the City Attorney

**THROUGH** Joyce Davis  
Interim Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst

**COPY** Michael Jones, 9<sup>th</sup> District Representative  
Summer Morris, 9<sup>th</sup> District Liaison  
Tabrica Rentz, Interim Deputy Richmond City Attorney

**DATE** March 30, 2021

**PAGE/s** 1 of 2

**TITLE** Cannabis Resolution

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance** ☐ **Resolution** ☒

#### REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

Michael Jones, 9<sup>th</sup> District  
Representative

#### SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Expedited

#### ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

The Patron believes that the new cannabis laws in Virginia should be couched with equity policies and perspectives. This is due to the fact that minorities have been adversely affected by the war on drugs, and are more likely to be incarcerated.

#### BACKGROUND

Whereas, The Richmond City Council commends Governor Northam and Virginia General Assembly legislators for passage of legislation that legalizes marijuana after many years and so much disproportionate enforcement of laws against Black and Brown citizens, resulting in negative impacts on individuals, children, families, communities, along with disrupting local government finances and budgets across Virginia;

Whereas, provisions in the current legislation recommend helping to reverse the harms done to impacted populations by repealing penalties and other efforts that meagerly and tacitly fund Equity and Socio-Economic uplift for large numbers of negatively impacted peoples and communities;

Whereas, subject-matter experts exist in these impacted communities such that many have the career experience and are capable and fully able to participate in helping to lead a newly organized Cannabis Community Re-Investment Board, that is both knowledgeable and very sensitive to the vital needs and actual on-the-ground issues of impacted communities, to which programmatic, corrective actions must take place to be effective;

Whereas, it is our hope that Governor Northam is fully aware of the enormous level of Equity Initiatives, Social Justice, and Economic Justice repair efforts that are needed to help do away with the poverty and remedy the destroyed human capital brought on by decades-long disproportionate law enforcement efforts waged against Black and Brown communities in the City of Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia;

Therefore, it is the request of the Richmond City Council that Governor Northam and General Assembly legislators hear the clarion calls of very knowledgeable Community Advocates in ways that ensure there are well-defined efforts ensconced into the legalization of marijuana legislation that is fully inclusive of Equity Initiatives, Social Justice and Economic Justice efforts, along with fully funding all efforts needed to help repair impacted communities, remove legal barriers to under-aged children, and adult convicted persons so all can pursue unimpeded and successful futures.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Fiscal Impact	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Amendment Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact:		

**Attachment/s**      Yes ☐    No ☒

Richmond City Council Ordinance/Resolution Request Form/updated 10.5.2012 /srs