



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE

February 6, 2024

SPONSORED BY

Matt Leming, City Councilor, Anna
Callahan, City Councilor

AGENDA ITEM

24-021 - Resolution to Support Adult Access and Education for Plant Medicine

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

A Resolution Supporting Adult Access and Education for Plant Medicine

Offered by Councilor Leming and Councilor Callahan

Whereas:

The so-called War on Drugs has led to the unnecessary penalization, arrest, and incarceration of vulnerable people, particularly people of color and people of limited financial means, rather than prioritizing harm-reduction policies to treat drug abuse as an issue of public health;

Whereas:

Entheogenic plants and fungi such as psilocybin mushrooms, ayahuasca, ibogaine, and mescaline-containing cacti have been shown by peer-reviewed studies and indigenous practice to be beneficial for treating spiritual trauma, addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, terminal illness anxiety, and cluster headaches among other conditions;

Whereas:

On average, we lose one of our neighbors in the Commonwealth to opioid overdose every week, as thousands of people we love struggle with addictions that entheogenic plant medicine has been shown to alleviate ;

Whereas:

Seven Massachusetts communities—Somerville, Cambridge, Northampton, Easthampton, Amherst, Salem, and Provincetown—and nearly two dozen cities nationwide have passed measures directing an end to arrests for growing and sharing these plant medicines, embracing their inferred constitutional right to regulate public safety that is outlined in the U.S. Department of Justice’s Cole Memorandum that permitted localities to deprioritize enforcement of cannabis;

Be it resolved

That the Medford City Council hereby maintains the use and possession of all controlled substances should be understood first and primarily as an issue of public health by all town entities and that no Medford employee should use any town resources to assist in enforcement of laws criminalizing personal controlled substance possession;

Be it further resolved

That the Medford City Council hereby maintains that investigation and arrest of adult persons for planting, cultivating, transporting, distributing, engaging in practices with, and/or possessing entheogenic plants and fungi listed in Schedules I-V of 21 U.S.C. § 812 of the Controlled Substances Act shall officially be the lowest law enforcement priority for Medford;

Be it further resolved

That this resolution does not authorize or enable any of the following activities: commercial sale of entheogenic plants and fungi, possessing or distributing these materials near schools, driving under the influence of these materials, or public disturbance;

Be it further resolved

That the Medford City Council calls upon the Middlesex County District Attorney to cease prosecution of persons involved in the possession, cultivation, or distribution of entheogenic plants and fungi;

Be it further resolved

That the Medford City Council calls upon state lawmakers to substitute the “Natural Psychedelic Substances Act” (a ballot question written by a DC-based PAC), with language that legalizes plant medicine services in a straightforward manner without an unelected control commission prone to regulatory capture by interests outside our communities;

Be it further resolved

That the Medford City Council endorses the passage of Senator Jehlen and Rep. Sabadosa’s S.1009 / H.1754 An Act Relative to Plant Medicine and asks that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Maura Healey, Attorney General Andrea Campbell, House Speaker Ronald Mariano, Senate Leader Karen Spilka, Judiciary Committee Chairs Senator Jamie Eldridge & Rep. Michael Day, and Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None