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NEW JERSEY: SUPPORT FOR LEGAL WEED STAYS HIGH

Public sees tax revenue boon; backs expungement

West Long Branch, NJ – The *Monmouth University Poll* finds more than 6-in-10 New Jersey residents support legalizing marijuana and half say a current proposal to make that happen in the Garden State is a good idea. The number of people who say that legalization will help the state’s economy and lead to a decrease in other drug crimes has ticked up over the past year. Three-quarters of the public also support the opportunity for those with past possession convictions to expunge their records.

Most New Jersey adults (62%) currently support legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use while 32% oppose this. These numbers are in line with the 59% - 37% split recorded in a Monmouth poll last year. However, statewide support for legalization is higher than five years ago when it stood at 48% in favor and 47% opposed. Marijuana legalization receives support from most Democrats (72%) and independents (61%), but less than half of Republicans (47%). By age, support stands at 81% among those 18 to 34 years old and at just over half among those age 35 to 54 (56%) and age 55 or older (53%).

“We find widespread public support for legalizing marijuana, but the devil is in the details. A question mark for some New Jerseyans is whether the state can set up an adequate regulatory system,” said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute.

Public support is a little softer, but still positive, on a legislative proposal to allow anyone over the age of 21 to purchase small quantities of marijuana for their own personal use from businesses that have been licensed by the state. Half (50%) say this is a good idea while 34% say it is a bad idea. Another 17% are unsure. The number of New Jerseyans who view this proposal as a good idea has jumped 14 points since 2014 when it was 36%, while the number who say it is a bad idea has fallen by 11 points from 45%.

Among those who say this legalization proposal is a good idea, 40% cite increased tax revenue and economic gains as a key reason for their support. Another 28% say prosecuting marijuana possession and jailing users wastes resources, 21% say that marijuana use is not harmful or at least no more so than alcohol and 14% cite medical benefits to using marijuana. Other reasons why people think it is a good idea include the idea that legalizing marijuana will provide more control over its use (14%), that there's no way to stop its use anyway so it might as well be made legal (8%), and the fact that other states are already legalizing it (5%).

Among those who say the legalization proposal is a bad idea, 28% feel marijuana use is harmful or addictive, 9% see it as a gateway drug, while 21% cite a potential increase in car accidents and driving under its influence. Another 20% worry that minors will get access to marijuana and 12% say its use is bad for society and will lead to other crime. Other reasons why people think it is a bad idea include decreased productivity at work (6%), difficulty in regulating it (6%), it is only being done for the tax revenue (5%) and that it should be limited to medical use (5%).

“A major reason for public support of the current proposal is the expectation it will boost tax revenues. The pressure is on, with nearby states also looking into legalization. New Jersey will need to stay ahead of the curve if it wants to maximize the expected economic benefits,” said Murray.

Two-in-three New Jerseyans (68%) believe that legalizing marijuana would boost the state's economy, up from 60% who said the same last year. Just 11% feel it would hurt the economy and 16% say it would have no impact. Democrats are even more likely to forecast economic benefits now (82%) than they were last year (68%). Nearly 2-in-3 independents (65%) agree, similar to the 60% who felt this way last year. Half of Republicans (51%) predict economic benefits from legalization, which is about the same as last year (50%).

About 3-in-10 Garden State residents (29%) feel that legalizing marijuana would lead to an increase in other types of drug crime, which is similar to 32% of the public who held this opinion last year. On the other hand, 32% say it will actually lead to a decrease in those offenses which is up slightly from 26%. Another 34% say marijuana legalization would have no impact on the rate of other drug crimes, compared to 39% who said it would have no impact in April 2018. New Jerseyans age 55 or older are more likely to feel that marijuana legalization will lead to an increase (42%) rather than decrease (14%) in other drug crimes. Younger adults age 18 to 34 feel the opposite (9% increase and 56% decrease). Those age 35 to 54 are divided between saying it would increase (34%) or decrease (28%) other drug crimes.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also finds that most New Jerseyans (74%) support giving people who were previously convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana the opportunity to clear those charges from their record. Another 18% would oppose this even if New Jersey were to legalize

recreational use of marijuana. Support for expungement comes from sizable majorities of Democrats (81%), independents (73%), and Republicans (64%), as well as those age 18 to 34 (81%), age 35 to 54 (74%), and age 55 or older (67%).

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from February 8 to 10, 2019 with 604 New Jersey adults. The question results in this release have a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

[Q1 held for future release.]

[Q2-12 previously released.]

13. Overall, do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?

TREND:	Feb. 2019	April 2018	April 2014
Support	62%	59%	48%
Oppose	32%	37%	47%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	5%	6%
(n)	(604)	(703)	(803)

14. There is currently a proposal in New Jersey to allow anyone over the age of 21 to purchase small quantities of marijuana for their own use from businesses that have been licensed by the state government to sell marijuana. Do you think this is a good idea or bad idea, or do you have no opinion on it?

TREND:	Feb. 2019	April 2014
Good idea	50%	36%
Bad idea	34%	45%
No opinion	17%	18%
(n)	(604)	(803)

[Question 14A was asked of those who said GOOD/BAD IDEA.]

14A. Why do you think it is a [good/bad] idea? [Note: Results add to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted]

<i>IF GOOD</i> [moe=+/-5.7%]	Feb. 2019
Tax revenue, economy	40%
Shouldn't be a crime, wastes resources	28%
Not harmful, like alcohol	21%
Medical benefits	14%
More control, make safer	14%
Cannot stop use	8%
Legal in other states	5%
Criminalization hurts minorities	3%
Other	8%
No answer	7%
(n)	(299)

<i>IF BAD</i> [moe=+/-6.8%]	Feb. 2019
Harmful, addictive	28%
DUI, accidents	21%
Minors will have access	20%
Bad for society, other crime	12%
Gateway drug	9%
Decreased productivity	6%
Hard to regulate	6%
Medical use only	5%
Only want tax revenue	5%
Other	7%
No answer	7%
(n)	(211)

15. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would help the state's economy, hurt the state's economy, or have no impact on the state's economy?

TREND:	Feb. 2019	April 2018
Help	68%	60%
Hurt	11%	16%
No impact	16%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%
(n)	(604)	(703)

16. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would lead to an increase in other drug crimes, lead to a decrease in other drug crimes, or have no impact on the number of other drug crimes?

TREND:	Feb. 2019	April 2018
Increase	29%	32%
Decrease	32%	26%
No impact	34%	39%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	3%
(n)	(604)	(703)

17. If New Jersey legalizes marijuana, would you support or oppose giving people who were previously convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana the opportunity to clear those charges from their criminal records?

	Feb. 2019
Support	74%
Oppose	18%
(VOL) Depends on amount	4%
(VOL) Don't know	4%
(n)	(604)

[Q18-24 previously released.]

[Q25-37 held for future release.]

METHODOLOGY

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from February 8 to 10, 2019 with a random sample of 604 New Jersey adults age 18 and older, in English. This includes 301 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 303 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. Telephone numbers were selected through random digit dialing and landline respondents were selected with a modified Trol Dahl-Carter youngest adult household screen. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 4.0 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)	
<i>Self-Reported</i>	
20% Republican	
45% Independent	
34% Democrat	
48% Male	
52% Female	
29% 18-34	
37% 35-54	
34% 55+	
58% White	
13% Black	
18% Hispanic	
10% Asian/Other	
64% No college degree	
36% College graduate	

MARGIN OF ERROR			
		<i>unweighted</i>	<i>moe</i>
		<i>sample</i>	<i>(+/-)</i>
TOTAL		604	4.0%
REGISTERED VOTER	Yes	549	4.2%
	No	55	13.2%
SELF-REPORTED	Republican	135	8.4%
PARTY ID	Independent	257	6.1%
	Democrat	196	7.0%
GENDER	Male	300	5.7%
	Female	304	5.6%
AGE	18-34	152	8.0%
	35-54	225	6.5%
	55+	226	6.5%
RACE	White non-Hispanic	386	5.0%
	Other	190	7.1%
COLLEGE GRADUATE	No degree	264	6.0%
	4 year degree	335	5.4%
INCOME	<\$50K	110	9.4%
	\$50 to <100K	194	7.0%
	\$100K+	240	6.3%
REGION	North	270	6.0%
	Central	163	7.7%
	South	154	7.9%

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Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 2/18/19

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
13. Overall, do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?	Support	62%	61%	72%	47%	61%	72%	70%	56%	81%	56%
	Oppose	32%	34%	22%	47%	35%	22%	25%	39%	14%	38%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	5%	6%	6%	4%	6%	5%	5%	4%	6%

		AGE	RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	H-B-A-O	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
13. Overall, do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?	Support	53%	65%	60%	63%	63%	68%	63%	60%	56%
	Oppose	42%	30%	35%	32%	33%	30%	27%	37%	39%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	5%	5%	6%	4%	2%	10%	3%	5%

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
13. Overall, do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?	Support	66%	70%
	Oppose	30%	24%
	[VOL] Dont Know	4%	5%

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
14. There is currently a proposal in New Jersey to allow anyone over the age of 21 to purchase small quantities of marijuana for their own use from businesses that have been licensed by the state government to sell marijuana. Do you think this is a ...?	Good idea	50%	48%	62%	37%	44%	64%	56%	44%	68%	46%
	Bad idea	34%	35%	23%	48%	40%	19%	27%	40%	13%	37%
	No opinion	17%	17%	15%	15%	16%	17%	17%	16%	19%	17%

		AGE	RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	H-B-A-O	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
14. There is currently a proposal in New Jersey to allow anyone over the age of 21 to purchase small quantities of marijuana for their own use from businesses that have been licensed by the state government to sell marijuana. Do you think this is a ...?	Good idea	39%	50%	50%	50%	50%	49%	54%	46%	42%
	Bad idea	47%	33%	33%	32%	36%	36%	27%	35%	38%
	No opinion	14%	16%	17%	18%	14%	15%	19%	18%	19%

Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 2/18/19

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
14. There is currently a proposal in New Jersey to allow anyone over the age of 21 to purchase small quantities of marijuana for their own use from businesses that have been licensed by the state government to sell marijuana. Do you think this is a ...?	Good idea	55%	56%
	Bad idea	33%	26%
	No opinion	12%	18%

		TOTAL
14A. Why do you think it is a GOOD idea? [n=299] [MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED]	Shouldnt be crime, wastes resources	28%
	Tax revenue, economy	40%
	More control, make safer	14%
	Not harmful, like alcohol	21%
	Medical benefits	14%
	Cannot stop use	8%
	Criminalization hurts minorities	3%
	Legal in other states	5%
	Other	8%
No answer	7%	

		TOTAL
14A. Why do you think it is a BAD idea? [n=211] [MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED]	DUI, accidents	21%
	Gateway drug	9%
	Harmful, addictive	28%
	Decreased productivity	6%
	Hard to regulate	6%
	Medical use only	5%
	Bad for society, other crime	12%
	Minors will have access	20%
	Only want tax revenue	5%
Other	7%	
No answer	7%	

Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 2/18/19

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
15. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would help the states economy, hurt the states economy, or have no impact on the states economy?	Help	68%	68%	72%	51%	65%	82%	71%	65%	84%	69%
	Hurt	11%	12%	6%	21%	12%	5%	9%	13%	3%	13%
	No impact	16%	16%	16%	20%	19%	11%	17%	15%	11%	12%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	5%	6%	9%	4%	3%	2%	7%	2%	5%

		AGE	RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	H-B-A-O	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
15. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would help the states economy, hurt the states economy, or have no impact on the states economy?	Help	53%	67%	70%	69%	66%	71%	65%	70%	64%
	Hurt	15%	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%	9%	12%	15%
	No impact	25%	17%	16%	16%	16%	13%	23%	13%	18%
	[VOL] Dont Know	6%	5%	3%	4%	6%	5%	3%	6%	3%

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
15. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would help the states economy, hurt the states economy, or have no impact on the states economy?	Help	70%	73%
	Hurt	7%	10%
	No impact	15%	13%
	[VOL] Dont Know	8%	4%

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
16. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would lead to an increase in other drug crimes, lead to a decrease in other drug crimes, or have no impact on the number of other drug crimes?	Increase	29%	29%	32%	44%	34%	17%	23%	35%	9%	34%
	Decrease	32%	31%	35%	19%	29%	44%	38%	26%	56%	28%
	No impact	34%	34%	30%	31%	32%	35%	34%	33%	31%	32%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	6%	3%	6%	5%	4%	5%	6%	4%	5%

		AGE	RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	H-B-A-O	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
16. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would lead to an increase in other drug crimes, lead to a decrease in other drug crimes, or have no impact on the number of other drug crimes?	Increase	42%	29%	29%	30%	28%	32%	25%	30%	36%
	Decrease	14%	29%	37%	32%	31%	34%	30%	30%	25%
	No impact	37%	37%	30%	32%	36%	32%	38%	34%	32%
	[VOL] Dont Know	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	2%	6%	6%	6%

Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 2/18/19

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
16. Do you think legalizing marijuana in New Jersey would lead to an increase in other drug crimes, lead to a decrease in other drug crimes, or have no impact on the number of other drug crimes?	Increase	28%	22%
	Decrease	31%	43%
	No impact	38%	30%
	[VOL] Dont Know	3%	5%

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34
17. If New Jersey legalizes marijuana, would you support or oppose giving people who were previously convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana the opportunity to clear those charges from their criminal records?	Support	74%	74%	70%	64%	73%	81%	77%	71%	81%
	Oppose	18%	18%	20%	27%	19%	10%	17%	19%	11%
	[VOL] Depends on amount	4%	4%	6%	4%	4%	5%	3%	5%	6%
	[VOL] Dont Know	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	6%	1%

		AGE		RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME		
		35-54	55+	White	H-B-A-O	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+
17. If New Jersey legalizes marijuana, would you support or oppose giving people who were previously convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana the opportunity to clear those charges from their criminal records?	Support	74%	67%	74%	74%	73%	76%	66%	81%	79%
	Oppose	19%	22%	18%	17%	18%	18%	23%	15%	15%
	[VOL] Depends on amount	1%	5%	4%	4%	5%	3%	8%	3%	3%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	2%	4%

		REGION OF STATE		
		North	Central	South
17. If New Jersey legalizes marijuana, would you support or oppose giving people who were previously convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana the opportunity to clear those charges from their criminal records?	Support	70%	76%	79%
	Oppose	21%	15%	14%
	[VOL] Depends on amount	4%	5%	4%
	[VOL] Dont Know	5%	3%	4%