

Marijuana and Massachusetts



In November, Massachusetts will vote on whether to legalize and commercialize the marijuana industry in the Commonwealth. Before you vote, be certain you understand the details of the proposal so you can make an informed decision on Ballot Question 4.

Ballot Question 4:

- **Sets no limits on potency of marijuana products.** Products may be engineered and sold with very high concentrates of THC – the psychedelic component in the plant that gets a person high. These products are considered the “crack” of marijuana and have names like wax, budder, dabs, shatter and honey oil.
- **Specifically authorizes the sale of marijuana infused foods and drinks** called edibles. Products like candy bars, gummy bears, “cannabis cola,” ice cream, etc. Potency levels can reach THC levels as high as 95% where one cookie can get multiple people high.
- **Severely limits municipalities’ (and the state’s) ability to regulate the nature and presence of the marijuana industry in their communities.** Ballot question 4 potentially invalidates any state or local rule deemed “unreasonably impracticable.” Municipality must allow marijuana retail businesses in an amount at least 20% of the number of alcohol package stores – unless voters pass an ordinance or bylaw by majority vote. 94G, s. 3(a)(2)(ii).
- **Sets no limit on the number of stores that can sell marijuana statewide or number of operations to grow or manufacture marijuana and marijuana products.** As written, ballot question 4 prohibits communities from enacting meaningful numerical caps on the number of marijuana stores (or types of marijuana businesses) except if explicitly authorized by special city/town referendum.
- **Mandates that communities must allow retail marijuana stores to open in any “area” that already has a medical marijuana dispensary.** Additionally, it grants existing medical marijuana facilities the right to enter the recreational market at the same location—i.e. convert their dispensary into a “pot shop.” If ballot initiative is enacted in November, then any existing or future medical dispensary is guaranteed cultivation, manufacturing and retail licenses for recreational sales until a 75 quota is reached. Ballot initiative SECTION 10 and 11.
- **Bars communities from restricting “home grows.”**
- **Sets the tax rate very low, meaning little or no net revenue benefit.** Ballot question 4, prohibits host agreements that require marijuana businesses to pay anything over and above whatever costs are directly attributable to their operation. This would limit the amount of money a community could collect from “pot shops”.
- **No protections against drugged driving.** Evidence shows that marijuana use impairs driving but there is no standard test to clearly identify a person under the influence of marijuana.
- **No provisions for data collection and research.** This would limit the ability of Massachusetts to determine the impact of commercialization of recreational marijuana on our communities and our state without significant costs to taxpayers.

****Commercialization of marijuana will result in increased access to marijuana by our young people. This coupled with decreased perception of harm associated with marijuana use as a result of the “normalization” of marijuana products, including candies, cookies, and sodas, will increase the likelihood that MA adolescents will use marijuana.****