

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Inter-Office Memorandum

SUBJECT: Proposed Resolution for State Legislators
Decriminalization of Marijuana

TO: Members of Council


FROM: Olga Negrón, Member of Council

DATE: July 11, 2018

Thank you for your support in passing Ordinance 2018-15 to establish Article 744 – Marijuana Possession. I believe each one of you agrees that it is time our nation takes marijuana off from Schedule 1 and legalize it, but we also know how slow our legislation moves. Although we have the discretion as a municipality to decriminalize it, we know very well that some municipalities do not have the support of their County District Attorneys. What we accomplished in passing this Ordinance will not be as effective if we do not make sure our state elected officials are aware of our adopted Ordinance. I believe this will support the efforts of some who we know are already working statewide. That is why I believe it is imperative that we follow up with a Resolution to our state legislators to let them know about our Ordinance, and urge them to move forward with statewide decriminalization of marijuana.

I hope everyone agrees, and please, feel free to add/change anything you think it's important to be address at this point. I would like for the resolution to be placed on our next meeting agenda.

Thank you.

 SK
Olga Negrón
Member of Council

Cc: J. Spirk, Jr., Esq.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Bethlehem has joined a growing number of cities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who have passed laws pertaining to small amounts of marijuana possession and possession of marijuana paraphernalia within their municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bethlehem encourages the State Legislature to enact a statewide law that offers an option to process the personal use of a small amount of marijuana and the possession of marijuana paraphernalia as a summary offense, rather than a misdemeanor offense; and

WHEREAS, statewide legislation would prevent arrests that would hinder individuals from gaining employment, college admission, securing college loans and apartment rental, and saddling them with lifetime criminal records; and

WHEREAS, passage of statewide legislation would spare a criminal record for many individuals who are productive citizens who work, pay taxes, and contribute to the community; save municipalities from the costs of prosecuting these minor offenses; and reduce the population in the state and federal correctional facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM THAT:

The City of Bethlehem City Council encourage the State Legislature to adopt statewide legislation that would provide all municipal police departments with the option/discretion to process personal possession of a small amount of marijuana and the possession of marijuana paraphernalia as a summary offense, rather than a misdemeanor offense.

Bryan G. Callahan

Michael G. Colón

Shawn M. Martell

Olga Negrón

J. William Reynolds

Paige Van Wirt

Adam R. Waldron