

## Recreational Marijuana Legalization in Rhode Island Derailed Until At Least 2018

Legalization of recreational marijuana in Rhode Island will not happen in 2017, as the Rhode Island House Committee on Judiciary has approved a bill recommending a study commission for marijuana legalization.

The bill, [H 5551 Substitute A2](#), would create a 17 member Special Legislative Commission to study the effects of legalizing recreational marijuana use on residents of Colorado and Washington, to study the fiscal impacts to those states, and to study the potential impact of legalizing recreational marijuana use in Rhode Island.

Of the 17 members, 3 will be appointed from each of the Senate and the House, one will be appointed from Smart Approaches to Marijuana or a similar organization, and one will be a member of an organization that is a proponent for the legalization of marijuana. Other members include the President of the Substance Use Mental Health Council of Rhode Island, the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Medical Society, the Director of the Department of Health, the President of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association, and the Attorney General, or their designees. Finally, there will be 4 members representing the chambers of commerce, medical marijuana patients, educators, and mental health professionals.

The Commission, which is generally viewed as being weighted against legalization, will report its findings and results to the General Assembly by March 1, 2018.

Before becoming law, the study commission bill still must be approved by the Senate and signed by Governor Raimondo.

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