

# Senator Bryce Reeves provides Inside Update on Virginia Marijuana Legislation

*Two 2024 Bills Attempt to Regulate Cannabis Sale Confusion, Health Crises, and Escalating Crime Rates*

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES , February 5, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Senator Bryce Reeves, best known for restoring concealed carry rights, major reforms in the foster care system, and securing the largest tax cut for military veterans in Virginia's history, now also serves on the Virginia Senate Cannabis Subcommittee. He is an Army Ranger veteran, retired narcotics detective, high school football coach, and father of two children just over 18, so he is intricately acquainted with marijuana use, abuse, distribution, and prosecution on many levels.

In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly passed SB2, a bill referred to in its summary as "Possession and consumption of marijuana: penalty." The bill did not legalize the consumption or sale of marijuana in Virginia, rather decriminalized "simple marijuana possession and provid(ed) a civil penalty of no more than \$25," causing mass confusion among those Virginians, who do not draw the distinction between legalization and decriminalization. SB2 also effectively undercut licensed medical marijuana dispensaries that previously underwent the process and enormous cost of application.

While decriminalizing marijuana significantly decreased the number of arrests for usage, marijuana-related domestic abuse, violent crime, insanity, sex crimes, and murder rates (of both the victim and perpetrator) continue to soar (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023; Miller, Ipeku, & Oberbarnscheidt, 2020; Dellazizzo, Potvin, Athanassiou, & Dumais, 2020)\*. The majority of non-drug using Virginians believe that marijuana is now legal, do not know they can lose their gun rights for having a medical marijuana card, and still can't figure out how to grow legal plants from illegal seeds. Schools, shelters, and medical facilities struggle to treat the rise in mental health disorders linked to marijuana usage, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder,



Senator Bryce Reeves hearing testimony in State Senate

depression, and severe anxiety (Sayal, 2023)\*.

“Democrats produced our current crisis by decriminalizing marijuana. Now they are using the proliferation of illegal weed as the reason to validate the market legalization” said Reeves, “Democrats tried decriminalizing marijuana for the benefit of those suffering and are reminded why illicit drugs should remain illegal. While I will never vote for cannabis, I will act within my power as a senior legislator to make sure the proposed cannabis bills address our current issues.”

After meeting with medical experts and reviewing empirical research studying the effects of cannabis, Reeves has become increasingly concerned. Studies indicate cancer patients, who use cannabis analgesia to treat neuropathic pain, show deteriorating health ([CDC](#) & [American Cancer Society](#)). Veterans who use cannabis to relieve PTSD symptoms have little success with its treatment and in some cases get worse with time ([Hill, Loflin, Browne, & Norman, 2023](#)).

The use of THC, particularly through vaping or smoking, often results in health issues such as bronchitis, heart disease, chronic cough, and cancer. Thus, according to Reeves, “our current legislation has created a culture in which cancer patients are smoking cancer-causing carcinogens to treat symptoms of cancer.”

“

Our current (cannabis) legislation has created a culture in which cancer patients are smoking cancer-causing carcinogens to treat symptoms of cancer.”

*Senator Bryce Reeves*

Many Republican electeds fear allowing the legal sale of cannabis will devastate Virginia’s most vulnerable populations, including children. Discussions in the General Assembly focus on the massive outbreak of middle and high school students, including those from Liberty Middle School, Armstrong High School, and Tallwood High School, being sent to the hospital from “overdose” or “medical distress” of what students believe are Delta-8 or THC gummies, in addition to the recent tragedy of five 4th

graders from Central Elementary School in Amherst hospitalized for ingesting fentanyl-laced THC gummies. Democrats, who mainly legislate to create a free marijuana market, must now also consider the additional costs of mental health treatment, hospitalization, drug rehab programs, and law enforcement intervention.

General Assembly Session 2024 Cannabis Control bills SB448 and SB423 have been heard by the



Bryce Reeves speaks with local farmers about cannabis as a crop

Virginia Senate, but their path to enactment is not yet clear. Both bills attempt to establish a framework by which marijuana may be legally sold on the retail market, resulting in guidelines for the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority. Reeves believes the bills may be merged for efficiency, but even if marijuana legislation is passed by the Virginia General Assembly, it is still too early in the legislative process to know whether Governor Youngkin will veto or sign 2024 cannabis bills.

Additional References:

- \*<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/DRRC.PDF>
- \*<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7084484/>
- \*<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychiatry/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2020.567887/full>
- \*<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/marijuana-use-mental-health-young-adults-weed-rcna84984>

Kara von Dresner de Rothschild  
RepublicanShare LLC  
+1 757-600-7321  
kara@republicanshare.com  
Visit us on social media:  
[Facebook](#)



Senator Reeves meets with small business owners to discuss upcoming cannabis legislation

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/685267194>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.