



Casey Weinstein
House District 37

Terrence Upchurch
House District 10

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor's Office
Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Pardoning state marijuana possession charges

Dear Governor DeWine:

We write today to urge you to immediately issue pardons for all existing State offenses of simple possession of marijuana. As you are aware, President Biden ordered executive action this week to pardon all prior Federal convictions for marijuana possession and has directed the Attorney General to develop a process for issuance of those pardons. It is time that we offer this same relief to Ohioans.

Criminalizing marijuana has upended the lives of too many Ohioans for conduct that many of our neighboring states no longer prohibit. Since 2018, 37,345 Ohioans have been arrested for marijuana possession. No one should be locked up in local jails or state prison for the sole reason of possessing cannabis.

Pardoning these individuals is an opportunity to right the wrongs in the failed approach to marijuana and offer many Ohioans a crucial fresh start. Your own Expedited Pardon Project states, "A pardon can open many doors that have been firmly closed." Ohioans with marijuana possession offenses are often denied housing, employment, and educational opportunities. Pardoning these Ohioans will allow them to obtain good-paying jobs, advance in their careers, secure housing, and even receive funding for college.

Issuing pardons will be life-changing for thousands of Ohioans, but it should only be the first step. Our neighboring states are already moving to legalize adult-use marijuana, so Ohio must act before we are left behind. This issue has received wide, bipartisan support across the state. Legalizing adult-use marijuana would create good-paying jobs and generate significant revenue for our state.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Casey Weinstein".

Casey Weinstein
State Representative
Ohio House District 37

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrence Upchurch".

Terrence Upchurch
State Representative
Ohio House District 10