

HB 1248 – Georgia Cannabis Freedom and Integrity Act

Legislative Rubric from Science for Georgia

[HB 1248](#) – Does several things:

1. Decriminalizes cannabis possession for personal use (up to 2oz cannabis, 10g concentrates, and 3 plants at home).
2. Expands low-THC oil rules for medicinal purposes.
3. Defines taxation on cannabis products
4. Driving under the influence, public consumption, and marketing to minors is still illegal.
5. Creates the *Georgia Cannabis Commission* that would oversee licensing, safety testing, supply chain tracking, and public education.

Criteria	Variables			
Impact Who is going to be impacted? Is it equitable? List stakeholders & opinions.	Negative		Positive	
	Unclear. Legalization of cannabis has remained a controversial issue; twenty-four states have legalized cannabis. Although two-thirds of Georgians believe that cannabis use should be legal, Georgia only allows cannabis through a very limited medical cannabis program . Cannabis legalization would benefit the cannabis industry by making consumers less reliant on illegal markets and allowing taxation on cannabis products.			
Reach Does it reach its target audience?	0 - No impact on target audience.	1 - Impacts narrow segment.	2 - Impacts majority; exceptions.	3 - Impacts entire target audience
	Since this bill affects the criminal action taken for possession of cannabis, a majority of the target audience—the general public 21 years or older, cannabis producers, and medical patients—are affected. This bill, however, allows the governing authority of each county to adopt ordinances, which may make punishment different by location.			
Scientific Merit Does it utilize scientific research accurately?	YES - this does follow scientific research accurately. Here's why....		NO - this does not present scientific research accurately.	
	Unclear. There is mixed evidence on the health effects of cannabis; medicinally, there is limited evidence that cannabis use alleviates neuropathic conditions, such as MS or chronic pain. Cannabis is a risk factor for some psychotic disorders and negative cardiovascular effects, can affect task performance; if smoked, cannabis can also affect the respiratory system. Though adverse health effects associated with cannabis use may exist, experts also do not expect to see a significant increase in marijuana use with legalization.			

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Financial Feasibility Is it financially feasible? or does this have burdensome finances (higher taxes, future costs, etc)?	0 - Extremely high costs	1 - Expensive but can be done	2 - Slight	3 - No financial burden
	<p>Reports on the economic benefits of cannabis legalization are mixed. Data on the economic effects is limited, as the industry is not old and has varying levels of legalization. The primary benefit is an increase in jobs, which has uneven distribution and may taper off over time. Further data is needed on the potential benefits of legalizing this industry.</p> <p>The creation of the commission is a financial cost to the state.</p>			
Political Feasibility Level of opposition and partisan disagreement.	0 - Majority disagreed, regardless of party.	1 – Split along party lines	2 - Minimal Opposition	3 - Complete consensus (zero to five 'Nays').
	<p>The bill is entirely Democrat sponsored.</p>			
Measurable Metrics? We recommend looking at these 3 metrics. Is the data available or being measured?	0 - no data	1 - some data / not accessible	2 - most data / somewhat accessible	3 - complete transparency
	<p>A metric for this bill could be to direct the Georgia Cannabis Commission to oversee the incidence of cannabis-related health events or the growth of the cannabis market in both production and consumption since the passing of this bill.</p> <p>Further data is needed on financial benefits and health effects of a legal cannabis industry.</p>			