



ADDENDUM

Eau Claire County

Committee on Administration

Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.

Eau Claire County Government Center

721 Oxford Ave., Eau Claire • Room 1277

1. **File No. 22-23/040:** Directing the County Clerk to place the referendum question contained in this resolution regarding legalization of cannabis on the November 8, 2022, ballot –
Discussion/Action

2. Appointments
 - a. Broadband Committee
 - i. Monica Obrycki
 - ii. Donald Mowry

Prepared by: Samantha Kraegenbrink – Assistant to the County Administrator

PLEASE NOTE: Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities through sign language, interpreters, remote access, or other auxiliary aids. Contact the clerk of the committee or Administration for assistance (715-839-5106). For additional information on ADA requests, contact the County ADA Coordinator at 839-6945, (FAX) 839-1669 or 839-4735, TTY: use Relay (711) or by writing to the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources, Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54703.

FACT SHEET

TO FILE NO 22-23/040

This resolution is meant to facilitate public input from Eau Claire County voters through an advisory referendum on the November 8, 2022 ballot, regarding whether Wisconsin should consider cannabis be legalized for adult-use, taxed and regulated like alcohol. With only a limited medical CBD program in place Wisconsin trails behind the 37 states that have legalized cannabis for medical or adult-use purposes. Through intentional policy making, Wisconsin can profit from the economic, social, and criminal justice reform gains of the legal cannabis industry.

A 2022 [survey](#) from Marquette Law School found that 61% of registered voters support legalization, including 51% of Republicans, 60% of Independents and 75% of Democrats.

Every year the cannabis industry generates billion in tax dollars for local and state governments. In 2021, adult-use cannabis [sales](#) brought in over \$3.7 billion in revenue.

A newly regulated industry means thousands of potential new businesses, creating key economic opportunities for farmers, small business owners, and communities disproportionately harmed by the War on Drugs.

The legal cannabis industry has the potential to create thousands of new jobs in Wisconsin. Today , the legal cannabis industry supports over [400,000](#) American jobs.

Among all states without legal cannabis, [Wisconsin](#) has the sixth largest illicit market, accounting for \$1.5 billion in annual illegal sales. Through legalization, the illicit market will shrink as cannabis consumption and sales shift to the regulated, aboveground market.

According to several studies, both [residential](#) and [commercial](#) properties increase following legalization.

Prohibition doesn't prevent cannabis consumption; it only prevents legal cannabis consumption. Regulating cannabis can ensure that consumers are purchasing safe, lab-tested products that are free of harmful chemicals and additives.

Wisconsin is in the minority of states that continue to criminalize cannabis possession and low-level sales. Cannabis possession alone made up [57%](#) of all drug arrests in the state in 2018. Legalization would put an end to the arrest and incarceration of individuals for nonviolent cannabis-related crimes.

According to the ACLU, Wisconsin ranks 14th in the U.S. for the largest racial disparities in arrests for cannabis possession. Black people are 4.2x more likely than white people to be arrested for cannabis possession.

Wisconsin has been [described](#) as an island surrounded by legal cannabis. Both Michigan and Illinois have benefited immensely from their respective medical and adult-use cannabis programs.

Illinois has brought in over \$600 million in tax revenue since adult-use sales began in 2020, and the industry is on track to [employ](#) 63,000 people by 2025.

Michigan has brought in nearly \$300 million in tax revenue since adult-use sales began in 2019, sending over [\\$42.2 million](#) to 163 participating municipalities and counties. The results of the advisory referendum will be shared with members of the Wisconsin assembly and senate, as well as the governor.

The proposed referendum question is as follows:

Should cannabis be legalized for adult use by Wisconsin residents at least 21 years of age, and be taxed and subject to regulations similar to those regulating alcohol?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Fiscal Impact:

Respectfully submitted,

Supervisor Judy Gatlin, District 14

2
3 DIRECTING THE COUNTY CLERK TO PLACE THE REFERENDUM QUESTION
4 CONTAINED IN THIS RESOLUTION REGARDING LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS ON
5 THE NOVEMBER 8, 2022 BALLOT
6

7 WHEREAS, A non-binding advisory referendum can gauge public opinion and recent
8 polling shows Wisconsin voters overwhelmingly support cannabis legalization; and

9 WHEREAS, Illinois and Michigan have legalized cannabis and since the legalization,
10 have collected approximately \$600 million and \$300 million in tax revenue respectively; and

11 WHEREAS, many of the states involved in legalizing cannabis have experienced
12 economic and community benefits including but not limited to increased tax revenue, new
13 business and employment opportunities, illicit market reduction, and safe, lab tested products;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Wisconsin currently has a limited medical CBD program. Cannabis being
16 legalized would make it possible for cannabis to be taxed and regulated in a manner similar to
17 alcohol use, and could be regulated by the Department of Revenue and the Department of
18 Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection; and

19 WHEREAS, in order to determine whether the people of Eau Claire County support or
20 oppose the legalization of cannabis, the County Board may conduct a countywide advisory
21 referendum, pursuant to Wis. Stat. §59.52(25), in the Fall Election on November 8, 2022.
22

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Eau Claire County Board of
24 Supervisors authorizes the following countywide advisory referendum be placed on the
25 November 8, 2022 ballot:
26

27 Should cannabis be legalized for adult use by Wisconsin residents at least 21 years of
28 age, and in addition, be taxed and regulated in a manner similar to alcohol possession and use?

29 _____ Yes

30 _____ No

31
32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors directs
33 the county clerk to forward this resolution to the governor, assembly members and senators
34 representing Eau Claire County.
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36 ADOPTED

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46 Committee on Administration

47 Dated this _____ day of July, 2022.