


COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: October 28, 2021

RE: **Request to Place Measure on the Agenda for November 2, 2021 Legislative Meeting**

Please place the following measures on the agenda for the November 2, 2021 Legislative Meeting:

- **Medical Marijuana Patient Access and Illicit Market Enforcement Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2021**
- **Medical Marijuana Patient Access and Illicit Market Enforcement Emergency Amendment Act of 2021**
- **Medical Marijuana Patient Access and Illicit Market Enforcement Temporary Amendment Act of 2021**

On July 25, 2021, provisions approved by the Council authorizing the Mayor to extend the validity of any licenses or registrations issued by the District for the duration of the public health emergency expired. As a result, roughly 6,216 patient registrations for the District's medical cannabis program expired in a very short time period, reducing the number of registered patients in the program from nearly 12,000 to approximately 5,500. Given the burdens associated with patient registration, and a thriving illegal cannabis market in the District, many of these patients may be driven to purchase illicit cannabis.

To lower barriers associated with patient registration, these measures amend the Legalization of Marijuana for Medical Treatment Initiative of 1999 to allow qualifying patients with a written recommendation from an authorized practitioner within the last two years to register with ABRA; to allow qualifying patients and caregivers whose registration cards expired or will expire between March 1, 2020 to January 31, 2022 to continue purchasing, possessing and administering cannabis until January 31, 2022; to authorize ABRA to issue biennial registration cards to patients and caregivers who register with ABRA by January 31, 2022; and to amend Section 501 of Title 22-C of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations to allow qualifying patients to establish residency in the District with one document, including a telephone bill or bank statement containing their District address.

To respond to the threats posed by illegal cannabis storefronts and delivery services, it is necessary amend D.C. Code 47-2844 to authorize the revocation of licenses, sealing of premises, and fines for businesses purchasing, selling or exchanging marijuana in violation of the Legalization of Marijuana for Medical Treatment Initiative of 1999 or D.C. Code 48-904.01; and to authorize civil penalties for the housing providers of illegal cannabis businesses to ensure that the District can adequately respond to illegal cannabis storefronts and delivery services.

Copies of the measures are attached. Please call me or Blaine Stum if you have any questions at (202) 724-8092.