



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Legislation Text

File #: 24-1069, Version: 1

Agenda Summary

In support of statewide natural psychedelics therapy.

Official Text

WHEREAS: The national mental health crisis impacts one in three Massachusetts residents who struggle with mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS: Pioneering research from Johns Hopkins and Harvard Medical School finds that natural psychedelics can be effective in managing treatment-resistant depression and other forms of mental illness; and

WHEREAS: The FDA recently granted psilocybin, a psychedelic, a “breakthrough therapy” designation for treatment-resistant depression; and

WHEREAS: Natural psychedelics have been found to treat severe forms of mental illness including: PTSD, anxiety, depression, and some forms of addiction ; and

WHEREAS: Massachusetts residents have the opportunity to pass a referendum known as Natural Psychedelics Substances Act on this year’s ballot, which would decriminalize possession of five naturally occurring psychedelics and legalize licensed facilities to offer guided therapies using these natural psychedelics; and

WHEREAS: This ballot initiative would create a Natural Psychedelic Substances Commission, which would adopt regulations governing licensing qualifications, security, recordkeeping, education and training, health and safety requirements, testing, and age verification for these facilities; and

WHEREAS: The Natural Psychedelics Substances Act would allow cities and towns to reasonably restrict the time, place, and operation of licensed facilities offering psychedelic substances, without the ability to outright prohibit them; and

WHEREAS: In addition to the state sales tax and an additional excise tax of 15 percent, cities and towns could impose a separate tax of up to two percent on transactions made at licensed facilities and thereby grow their commercial tax base; and

WHEREAS: Somerville has distinguished itself as a leader in harm reduction and alternative therapies, including in 2021 when the council unanimously passed a resolution supporting the decriminalization of entheogenic plants and urging that governments at all levels approach “all controlled substances first and primarily through the lens of public health”; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the Somerville City Council supports the passage of the Natural Psychedelics Substances Act ballot question.

