

Senate Bill 219: Regulated Psilocybin Access Would Benefit Mental Health



Senate Bill 219 Overview

- ❖ Senate Bill 219, the Medical Psilocybin Act, would create a regulated system to allow patients with qualifying conditions (PTSD, substance use disorders and end-of-life care) to access and use psilocybin under the guidance of a licensed healthcare provider. New Mexico would join Colorado and Oregon in authorizing facilitated use programs for innovative therapeutic care.
 - The program will be managed by the Department of Health (DOH) and a nine-person Medical Psilocybin Advisory Board. Among other duties, the board will oversee the collection and analysis of program results and will include representatives from a tribe, nation, or pueblo and a veteran of the US armed services, among others.
 - DOH will oversee the program, establish training for clinicians and producers, and license producers to grow mushrooms and process psilocybin. DOH will be responsible for determining program aspects such as dosage, administration, production and storage. DOH will also have authority to expand upon qualifying conditions for treatment.
 - Under SB219, psilocybin therapy will require at a minimum a preparation session, an administration session and a follow-up integration session, all in DOH-approved settings.
 - SB219 would retain current prohibitions on the commercial manufacture and sale of other psychedelic compounds, and prohibits synthetic psilocybin, as well as driving intoxicated.

Promise of Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy

- ❖ Over the past decade, the medical and mental health communities have increasingly recognized the potential of psychedelic therapies for the treatment of intractable mental health conditions like addiction, anxiety, depression, PTSD, and other disorders.
 - New Mexico has a high incidence of mental health illness among adults, especially among veterans and first responders.
 - Psychedelics are demonstrating the potential to be more effective than conventional drugs now being used to treat a range of mental health disorders, but legal barriers to innovation have persisted.
- ❖ In 2018 and 2019, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration designated psilocybin as a “breakthrough therapy” for major depressive disorder and severe treatment-resistant depression.
 - Psilocybin has low physiological toxicity, low risk of abuse, safe psychological reactions, and no linked persistent harmful physiological or psychological effects during or after use, according to thousands of years of anecdotal data, and contemporary scientific study.

Bottom Line

- ❖ SB219 builds upon last year’s study bill on psilocybin for therapeutic purposes (*New Mexico Senate Memorial 12, 2024*), creating a regulated and limited program to access psilocybin, which has shown tremendous promise in the therapeutic treatment, with minimal risk to both public safety and public health.

Contacts:

- Leonard Gilroy, Vice President, Government Reform (leonard.gilroy@reason.org)
- Geoff Lawrence, Director, Drug Policy Project (geoff.lawrence@reason.org)