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POLITICS

Oregon State Board Says Psilocybin Effective At Treating Certain Mental Condition



Published 13 hours ago on July 29, 2021

By **Kyle Jaeger** 



 An Oregon review panel established under the state's [voter-approved therapeutic psilocybin legalization initiative](#) has released a report stating that the psychedelic holds significant medical value for a number of mental health conditions.



After reviewing about 600 studies that looked into psilocybin, a subcommittee of the Psilocybin Advisory Board determined that the substance is shown to be “efficacious reducing depression and anxiety, including in life-threatening conditions.”

It noted that the studies that were under review all involved administration in a clinical supervised setting, which is also required under Oregon’s psilocybin program.

“Across studies, psilocybin increases spiritual well-being which may mediate other of benefits,” the report, which is the product of eight weeks of review, states. “Study participants also commonly rate their psilocybin experiences as highly meaningful.”

Mason Marks, who serves on the [Oregon advisory board for psilocybin](#), told Marijuana Moment that this first report “could have practical implications for the program because

contains recommendations to the Oregon Health Authority,” but he added that the recommendations “will evolve over time.”

Marks, who is also directing Harvard Law School’s [first-of-its-kind psychedelics policy](#) said the subcommittee “did an admirable job of producing the document under unfavourable time constraints.”

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown’s (D) office announced the appointment of [17 members of the psilocybin advisory board](#) in March. The panel is meant to help facilitate the implementation of the historic reform initiative.

Sam Chapman, executive director of the [Healing Advocacy Fund](#) and the former campaign manager of the successful psilocybin ballot effort, said that the new [report](#) “represents the first time a state government has done such a thorough review of the available research. It’s “another proof point in the growing evidence that psilocybin can be an effective tool for healing and growth.”

“As designed from Measure 109, this research will now be the foundation for creating a regulatory framework voters approved for the introduction of a psilocybin services program in Oregon in 2023,” he said.

Here’s a list of the advisory board’s recommendations for psilocybin implementation

1. To end evidence inequity, Oregon Health Authority (OHA) should gather additional information from individuals, communities, and institutions not represented in scientific literature (e.g., those administering psilocybin in cultures with longstanding practices and others with experience administering psilocybin in the community) in developing best practices for a psilocybin services framework that maximizes potential benefits and minimizes risks
2. The OHA should consider strength of evidence and risk of bias in developing a psilocybin treatment framework, particularly given the early stage of most psilocybin treatment trials.
3. OHA should consider commissioning an ongoing review (a.k.a. “living review mechanism) to periodically summarize updates in the field of psilocybin research and practice, given the rapidly evolving evidence base for psilocybin potential benefits and risks.

4. OHA should consider how consumers and providers of psilocybin services are of the potential negative effects that can occur during and after psilocybin administration (e.g., citizen education initiatives and informed consent process for consumers; incorporation of common acute and rare long-term adverse events into training licensing, and ongoing continuing education processes for providers).
5. Because there is evidence of dose dependence of the potential benefits and risks of psilocybin, OHA should support the development of guidance regarding optimal dosing parameters to minimize these negative effects and consider how this knowledge should be disseminated to psilocybin providers and consumers (e.g., during provider training and licensing and/or via product monitoring and control).
6. OHA should consider the role of screening processes to identify individuals at higher than usual risk of negative physical and psychological effects of psilocybin and use this information to promote safety while preserving equitable access.
7. Given the limited generalizability of currently available clinical trials, OHA should explore the feasibility of developing a voluntary process and outcome measures for ongoing monitoring of psilocybin services implementation in Oregon, including a consensual assessment of implementation in key population subgroups (e.g., by race/ethnicity, gender, and comorbid medical conditions), indications for psilocybin services, psilocybin exposure (e.g., amount and source type of psilocybin), and other specific outcome measures to help inform safety and equitable access to psilocybin services. Declining to share information should not affect access to psilocybin services and the optional nature of the data sharing should be prominently emphasized in the informed consent process.
8. OHA should consider the range of research on cultivating and characterizing psilocybin-containing mushrooms (e.g., genotyping to confirm identity, methods for measuring psilocybin concentration) in developing a regulatory framework.
9. Because of toxicity concerns, OHA should initially consider prioritizing cultivation of *Psilocybe cubensis* and use of grain-based substrates for cultivation rather than wood, and revisit cultivation of other species as more information becomes available.
10. OHA should explore feasibility and capacity of employing modern DNA sequencing based techniques to identify fungi and fungal tissues for use in production licensing.

quality control.

11. OHA should facilitate the development of screening requirements for possible mushroom contaminants.

Marks, the state advisory board member, pointed out that while the report is valuable also “very narrow, focusing primarily on data from randomized controlled trials (RCT

“It was widely acknowledged that other important sources of information were omitted including the epidemiological, anthropological, and psychological literature, Indigenous practices, and the voices of people with lived experience,” he said. “As a result, the Board be pursuing research in these and other areas to guide its recommendations to the OHA Health Authority.”

“Though the Board’s first report is useful, I would recommend that regulators hold off incorporating these findings into their policy recommendations until additional research has been completed by the Board,” Marks added.

There’s growing interest in psychedelics reform at the local, state and federal level.

While the U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday again defeated a spending bill amendment meant to promote research into the medical benefits of substances like psilocybin and MDMA, it picked up about 50 “yes” votes since it was last considered in 2019.

The chamber did approve report language that says federal health agencies should promote research into the therapeutic potential of psychedelics for military veterans suffering from a host of mental health conditions.

Also this week, Massachusetts lawmakers heard testimony about a bill to create a task force charged with studying the implications of legalizing psychedelics like psilocybin and ayahuasca.

Three Massachusetts cities—Northampton, Somerville and Cambridge—have each passed resolutions to deprioritize enforcement of laws against the possession, use and distribution of a wide range of psychedelics and other drugs.

The state’s developments are some of the latest iterations of a national psychedelics movement that’s spread since Denver became the first city to decriminalize psilocybin

[mushrooms](#) in 2019.

Besides those cities, however, four others—[Oakland](#), [Santa Cruz](#), [Ann Arbor](#) and [Washington D.C.](#)—have also decriminalized possession of plant- and fungi-based psychedelics.

An [Arcata, California](#) councilmember announced this month that she would sponsor a measure to decriminalize psychedelics. That measure has since been referred to a committee.

The governor of Connecticut signed legislation recently that includes language requiring the state to carry out [a study into the therapeutic potential of psilocybin mushrooms](#).

Texas also recently enacted a bill to require the state [study the medical benefits of psychedelics for military veterans](#).

A New York lawmaker introduced a bill last month that would require the state to establish an institute to similarly [research the medical value of psychedelics](#).

In Oakland, the first city where a city council voted to broadly deprioritize criminalizing entheogenic substances, lawmakers [approved a follow-up resolution](#) in December that calls for the policy change to be adopted statewide and for local jurisdictions to be allowed to conduct healing ceremonies where people could use psychedelics.

After Ann Arbor legislators passed a decriminalization resolution last year, a county prosecutor recently announced [that his office will not be pursuing charges](#) over possession of entheogenic plants and fungi—“regardless of the amount at issue.”

The Aspen, Colorado City Council [discussed the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#), including psilocybin and proposals to decriminalize such substances at a meeting in May. But the council said, as it stands, enacting a reform would be more better handled at the state level where entheogens remain strictly federally controlled.

Seattle lawmakers also recently sent a letter to members of a local task force focused on the opioid overdose epidemic, imploring the group to [investigate the therapeutic potential of psychedelics](#) like ayahuasca and ibogaine in curbing addiction.

[Idaho Officials Clear Marijuana Activists To Collect Signatures For Revised Legalization Ballot](#)

Measure

Photo courtesy of [Wikimedia/Mushroom Observer](#).

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Kyle Jaeger



Kyle Jaeger is Marijuana Moment's Sacramento-based senior editor. His work has also appeared in High VICE and attn.

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POLITICS

Federal Court Rejects Ohio Marijuana Activists' Challenge Over 2020

Decriminalization Initiatives



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By **Kyle Jaeger** 



A federal court on Wednesday ruled that a lawsuit from Ohio marijuana activists concerning proposed decriminalization measures they wanted to place on local 2020 ballots across the state could not proceed despite their repeated attempts to seek petitioning relief amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The case before the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit proved unsuccessful with judges deciding that the challenge was no longer relevant because last year's election passed and the case was therefore moot.

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House Approves Marijuana Banking, Employment And D.C. Sales Provisions In Large-Scale Spending Bill



Published 15 hours ago on July 29, 2021

By **Kyle Jaeger** 



The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday approved a package of spending legislation that contains measures to provide protections for banks that work with state-legal cannabis businesses and allow the legalization of marijuana sales in Washington, D.C., among many other drug policy provisions.

The appropriations legislation and attached reports also direct federal government agencies to reconsider policies that fire employees for using cannabis in compliance with state law, criticize restrictive hemp regulations, encourage CBD to be allowed in foods and urge expanded research on marijuana and other substances.

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POLITICS

Idaho Officials Clear Marijuana Activists' Collect Signatures For Revised Legalization Ballot Measure



Published 18 hours ago on July 29, 2021

By **Kyle Jaeger** 



Idaho officials have cleared activists to begin collecting signatures for a revised initiative to legalize possession of marijuana that they hope to place before voters on the 2022 ballot.

After being reviewed by the state attorney general's office, the latest version of the measure was uploaded to the secretary of state's website on Wednesday in final form along with official short and long ballot titles.

Meanwhile, a separate [campaign to legalize medical cannabis in the state](#) is also underway with advocates actively collecting signatures to qualify that measure for next year's ballot.

The attorney general previously outlined a number of concerns on potential legal issues with

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