

NEW YORK STATE

**MARKING
PROGRESS
HAPPEN**

The graphic features three rows of large, white-outlined letters. The first row contains the word 'MARKING', the second row 'PROGRESS', and the third row 'HAPPEN'. Each letter is a window into a different scene: 'M' shows a woman with a red headband; 'A' shows a woman with glasses; 'R' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'K' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'I' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'N' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'G' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'P' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'R' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'O' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'G' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'R' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'E' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'S' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'S' shows a woman with a rainbow flag; 'H' shows a blue bridge; 'A' shows a blue bridge; 'P' shows a blue bridge; 'P' shows a blue bridge; 'E' shows a blue bridge; 'N' shows a blue bridge.

2020 STATE OF THE STATE



MAKING PROGRESS HAPPEN

2020 State of the State
Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

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5. SOCIAL JUSTICE

In New York, our great diversity is our great strength, and throughout America's history New York has shown the nation the way. Governor Cuomo has worked every day to ensure opportunity and justice for all New Yorkers. As part of his 2019 Justice Agenda, he passed the most comprehensive anti-sexual harassment protections in the nation, overhauled the criminal justice to secure the right to a speedy trial, and enacted the Farmworkers Bill of Rights. Building on nine years of concrete social justice initiatives, Governor Cuomo will continue to fight for progressive legislation and necessary funding to advance the rights and opportunities of all New Yorkers.

Part 1: Enacting a Comprehensive Plan to Legalize Adult-Use Cannabis

Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York has become a national leader in its approach to cannabis legalization and regulation. The Governor has championed proposals across all cannabis sectors that promote consumer safety and the stringent regulation of cannabis

products, invest in hemp and cannabinoid research, and ensure social and economic justice for those impacted by the failed policy of cannabis prohibition and the war on drugs. In 2014, Governor Cuomo signed the Compassionate Care Act into law, establishing New York State's Medical Marijuana Program, and the Governor has since continued to advance improvements to the program to increase access and improve the quality of care for patients. In addition, in 2015, Governor Cuomo launched the New York State Industrial Hemp Research Pilot which has since grown into one of the most robust and innovative programs in the country.

Proposal. Authorizing Adult-Use Cannabis

In 2018, Governor Cuomo directed the Department of Health to launch a multi-agency study to review the potential impact of regulated cannabis in New York. The study concluded that the positive impact of a regulated cannabis program outweighs the negative aspects. The Governor endorsed the study, created a regulated cannabis workgroup and conducted a series of statewide listening sessions to garner input from communities. From this extensive research and stakeholder engagement, the

Governor introduced the Cannabis Regulation and Taxation Act (CRTA).

For decades, communities of color were disproportionately affected by the unequal enforcement of marijuana laws. Last year we righted that when Governor Cuomo signed legislation to decriminalize cannabis and expunge prior cannabis convictions. Additionally, in 2019, Governor Cuomo held a first in the nation cannabis and vaping summit with governors from neighboring states and agreed to a set of core principles on how to best regulate the cannabis and vaping industries.

Governor Cuomo proposes a comprehensive cannabis program to protect consumers, promote equity, and generate economic development by working with our neighbors New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania to coordinate a safe and fair system.

He proposes creating a new Office of Cannabis Management to specialize in cannabis regulation – overseeing the medical, adult-use and hemp programs. The proposal will administer social equity licensing opportunities, develop an egalitarian adult-use market structure, and facilitate market entry through access to capital, technical assistance, and incubation of equity entrepreneurs. The proposal will also correct past harms to

individuals and communities that have disproportionately been impacted by prohibition.

To safeguard public health, the proposal limits the sale of cannabis products to adults 21 and over and establishes stringent quality and safety controls including oversight over the packaging, labeling, advertising, and testing of all cannabis products. Cannabis regulation offers the opportunity to invest in research and direct resources to harm reduction, treatment and prevention providers that have long been underfunded. Further, the proposal includes a statewide education campaign that communicates the health risks of cannabis use for vulnerable populations and educates the public about the dangers of driving while impaired.

Cannabis legalization has the potential to have a significant economic impact on distressed areas in New York creating thousands of new jobs, spurring billions in economic activity and generating an estimated \$300 million in tax revenue when fully implemented.