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Community Board 10's 2022 CANNABIS RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2022 the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA), the most progressive legalization legislation in the country, showing other states how to model equitable and just marijuana legalization was signed into law in New York State;

WHEREAS, on January 5, 2022 Governor Kathy Hochul announced New York will establish a \$200 million fund to support social equity applicants seeking adult use cannabis licenses utilizing a “public/private” funding mechanism model based on licensing fees and taxes but there are concerns that money will not be available to the applicants until after the adult use market is already up and running;

WHEREAS, the Rockefeller Drug Laws were enacted statewide and later amplified in the 1990's with the habitual offender laws for the use of heroin, morphine, opium, cocaine or cannabis led to the arrest and detainment of more Black people in Harlem despite similar cannabis usage rates across racial and ethnic groups. Extreme racial disparities continue in cannabis enforcement and the impacts of criminalization can stay with an individual for life. New York City reported over 90% of cannabis arrests were in people of color in 2020, 56% Blacks and 36% Hispanics. Compare differences in arrest rates for NYPD Precinct 66, Borough Park in Brooklyn of 44/100,000 residents (with 15% Black and Hispanic residents) versus NYPD Precinct 28, Central Harlem of 328/100,000 residents (with 78% Black and Hispanic residents);

WHEREAS, under MRTA, 40 percent of tax revenue from cannabis will be steered to minority communities that had disproportionate numbers of marijuana arrests, whom also bore the worst of the arrest crusade and are now doubly ravaged by COVID-19 deaths, job losses, and business closures;

WHEREAS, despite New York's 2019 decriminalization and expungement legislation, decades of criminalization continue to impact Harlemites' ability to create businesses, secure housing, employment, and higher education and have severely harmed Harlemites with immigration status concerns and child welfare cases;

WHEREAS, Community reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue and the creation of a diversified and equitable industry that supports New York-based micro and small Black businesses, Black farmers and the conversion of legacy market operators into the regulated market will be imperative coming out of this COVID crisis and vital to Harlem's long-term economic sustainability;

WHEREAS, Revenue from cannabis legalization in New York will potentially generate \$4.1 billion in economic output and create more than 30,000 new jobs and must include strong diversity and economic justice protections. Smart implementation must also include a licensing structure favorable for Harlem's Black micro and small businesses, Black small-scale cultivators and legacy market operators. This means funding the social equity incubator program from day one and providing low- and zero-interest forgivable loans;

WHEREAS, cannabinoids are active ingredients in cannabis which act on receptors in the brain and for adult use. Cannabis has been shown to be effective at relieving chronic pain. *Journal Clinical Psychology Review*, revealed that using cannabis may help people with alcohol or opioid dependencies to fight their addictions. Smoking or vaping cannabis can cause breathing problems. Regularly smoking cannabis may cause dependence. Using cannabis is unsafe during pregnancy and can slow the growth of the fetus and increase the risk for premature birth and stillbirth. Using cannabis might make it harder to quit smoking.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we urge the New York State legislature to ensure MRTA implementation is done with justice, reinvestment, education, health and social economic equity at the core by including amnesty/safe harbor for legacy operators, provide banking access and funding opportunities especially for Black cannabis startups, micro businesses, small businesses, legacy market operators interested in entering the legal market and robust plans to provide continuous educational support for both Black business operators and local communities in Harlem.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the OCM provide funding to community-based organizations to hold educational clinics for the community with respect to provisions of MRTA that have changed the status of adult use of cannabis in the state, that open up business opportunities to social equity applicants, and provide for expungement of prior criminal convictions for cannabis related offenses.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the OCM encourage units of the City University of New York, and the State University of New York to offer courses and/or training to students wishing to enter any of the various aspects of the cannabis field, i.e. hemp, medical, or adult use cannabis.

BE IT RESOLVED, during implementation, the New York Office of Cannabis Management's advisory board appointments shall include at least one person who is a Harlem community representative of an organization with a stated mission of studying, advocating, or adjudicating against Black historical oppression, past and present discrimination, unemployment, poverty and income inequality, and other forms of social injustice or inequality like the communities impacted by past federal and state drug policies and who has a clear understanding of the enormous economic benefits that must accrue in massive generational wealth.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that on April 6, 2022, Manhattan Community Board 10 passed this Resolution for the implementation of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) is a model for legalization with racial justice, social equity and economic justice, and community reinvestment at the core and that we urge the State, the CCB and the OCM do all they can to ensure the inclusion of the representation of African Americans in the New York cannabis industry. The resolution was passed by a unanimous vote of (31) Yes (0) No (0) Abstentions.