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November 21, 2018

Cannabis Legalization in Committee on Monday

As you may be aware, a joint committee hearing will be held on Monday with the Senate Budget and Appropriations and the Assembly Appropriations Committee to consider legislation to legalize adult use of recreational marijuana.

The Committees will consider amendments to S-2703 and A-4497. We anticipate that these amendments will be made available today. In addition, the Committees will also consider legislation to expand medical marijuana.

The League, along with the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association issued a coalition letter to the Governor and all members of the Legislature outlining our recommendations and concerns.

For more on the League's position on this issue please see our September 12 letter available at www.njslom.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/756.

We anticipate that the amended bill will include the local optional excise tax of 2%. Based on our research and what we heard from local officials at the conference session last week that amount is insufficient. We continue to advocate that municipalities should have the option of instituting an up-to-5% local option excise tax.

Further, there are continued concerns about how the State will fund the costs borne by local governments associated not only with the judicial expungement process but other local costs. In addition, there are concerns over land use controls, management issues, and other issues of interest to local governments.

According to public press reports, there remains a difference of opinion between the Legislative sponsors and the Governor's office over the state tax rate and the composition and function of the State's regulatory oversight. Sponsors hope to post the bills for final

votes by the end of the year.

Please take action and contact your Legislators as soon as possible on this time-sensitive issues.

Contact: Mike Cerra, Assistant Executive Director
609-695-3481, x120. mcerra@njslom.org



222 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
Phone: 609-695-3481 Web: njslom.org

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