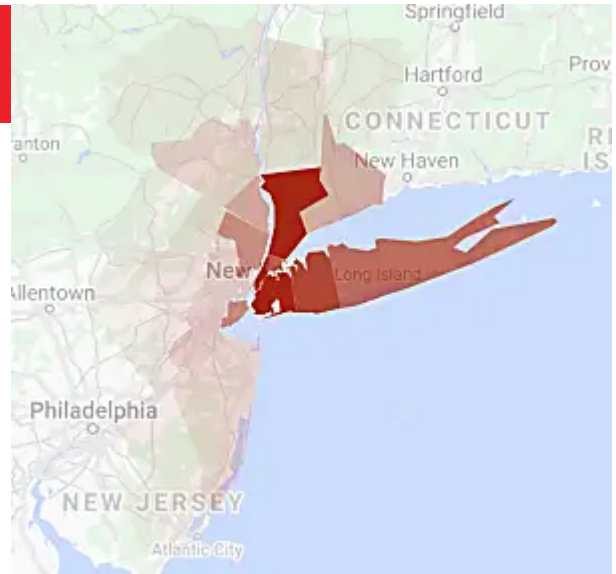




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NEWS

LEGALIZE IT? NJ Pot Supporters Need To Know Where To Find It On Ballot, Advocates Warn



Jerry DeMarco 10/19/2020 1:25 p.m.



BAKERY: Thumbs up increase as ages of poll respondents decrease. Photo Credit: Pixabay

Polls show most New Jerseyans want marijuana legalized, but what Garden State voters may not know, advocates say, is that the question is on the back of the election ballot.

A recent survey by the Stockton University Polling Institute found 66% of New Jersey respondents favoring legalized herb. Separate polls have gotten 65% and 61% thumbs up, respectively.

But those are polls, not elections.

The difference: Referendum questions always go at the end of ballots, which usually leads to slimmer margins than polls.

This year, the cannabis legalization question is on the back of the ballot.

It's left some advocates concerned that voters might not know (or remember?) to turn the page.

For that reason NJ CAN 2020, one of two campaign committees working to pass the weed referendum, released a series of English- and Spanish-language #TurnThePage video ads:

#TurnThePage

NJ CAN 2020

Their target demographic: Young adults.

At Stockton, support for legalization dropped as the age of poll respondents increased.

The breakout:

- 88% support from respondents 18 to 29 years old;
- 76% support from those 30 to 49 years old;
- 60% support from 50-64-year-olds;
- 52% support from those 65 and older.

Also, 76% of Democrats favored legalization versus 52% of Republicans, according to the poll.

Overall, 9% of respondents called themselves neutral, while 1% weren't sure – and another 1% refused to answer.

Stockton polled 721 likely voters. The results had a margin of error of +/- 3.7 percentage points.

Gov. Phil Murphy said criminalizing pot wastes taxpayers' money and misses a steady stream of serious revenue.

More importantly, he said, it creates serious hiring and other problems for people who aren't criminals.

"I wish we could have gotten it done through a legislative process," Murphy said. "We just couldn't find the last few votes, so it's on the referendum. I'm strongly supporting it—first and foremost for social justice reasons.

"Legalization would right those wrongs while also spurring massive economic development opportunities, job creation, and new tax revenue."

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