

November 5, 2020

Katal Weekly Update

Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice



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2020 Election: Victory for the Movement to End the War on Drugs



While this election has been a nail biter on the national front, at the local and state level, there have been some extraordinary victories in the fight to end the war on drugs and mass incarceration, as voters across the country backed more progressive drug laws.

New Jersey, Arizona, Montana and South Dakota all voted to **legalize marijuana for recreational adult use**, putting the total of legalized marijuana states to 15 plus Washington D.C. And Mississippi voters [passed a ballot measure](#) that legalizes cannabis for medical use.

[Oregon voters approved Measure 109](#), legalizing psilocybin – the main chemical property of psychedelic mushrooms – for therapeutic use in a supervised setting, with the aim of treating depression and other mental health conditions. And [Washington D.C. voters passed Initiative 81](#) - known as the Entheogenic Plant and Fungus Policy Act of 2020 - which effectively decriminalizes the use of psilocybin and other psychedelic plants.

And in what is perhaps the most remarkable of these developments, Oregon voters approved a measure to make the state the [first to decriminalize possession of all drugs for personal use](#), along with expanding access to evidence-informed drug treatment and harm reduction services. This victory is “a landmark declaration that the time has come to stop criminalizing people for drug use,” said **Kassandra Frederique, executive director of the Drug Policy Alliance**, in [Newsweek](#). Kudos to our colleagues at the Drug Policy Alliance who led this campaign!

As we look towards the 2021 legislative sessions in Connecticut and New York, we are excited to build on this momentum and fight for full drug decriminalization in both states!

Read more about the cannabis legalization measures passed this week:

- [“Marijuana Legalization Measures Pass in 5 States”](#) via Huffpost
- [“Big Wins For Cannabis And Drug Law Reform In The 2020 Election”](#) via The Weed Blog
- [“7 Key Criminal Justice Measures That Could Change Criminal Justice”](#) via The Marshall Project

Join Us Thursday, 11/12 for our New York Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call



Save the date! Join us next **Thursday, November 12th from 12 to 1 p.m.** for our next [New York Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call](#) held via zoom. These calls bring together organizers and advocates to share updates about criminal justice reform in New York, and discuss ways to align, coordinate, and support each other’s work to end mass incarceration. In the midst of this pandemic, these calls are another way to connect with each other to continue our collective movement work for freedom and justice.

[Register for the meeting here.](#)

For more information about our monthly calls in New York or how to get involved as a member to join our weekly member meetings, contact Lead Organizer Kenyatta Thompson, at kthompson@katalcenter.org.

Keep practicing social distancing, wear your mask, wash your hands, and check in on your neighbors. If you want to get involved, learn more about our work, or just connect, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance health, equity, and justice for everyone. Join us: web, Twitter, Facebook! Email: info@katalcenter.org. Phone: 646.875.8822.