



Mississippi Minority Cannabis Association

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MMCA is:

- **A Non-Profit association of members organized to network with like organizations across the nation.**
- **Includes many minority license candidates (growers, processors, transporters, and dispensers), attorneys, municipals officials, county officials, farming co-ops, ancillary business owners, corporations.**
- **GOAL:** *To create equal access for cannabis businesses, promote economic empowerment for communities of color **by creating policy considerations, social programming, and outreach initiatives** to achieve equity for the communities most affected by the “war on drugs.”*



Industry Key Facts

- The legal marijuana industry was valued at \$10.4 billion dollars in 2018 and is expected to grow to \$70.6 billion by 2028. (Projected \$14.8B by 2027 for medical marijuana)
- The economic power of this industry is also reflected in the jobs it has created. The legal marijuana industry directly employs around 321,000 FTE (full-time equivalent)¹ Americans.

¹Bruce Barcott, Beau Whitney, and Janessa Bailey, February 2021, 'The Us cannabis industry now supports 321,000 full-time jobs' , Viewed 9 July 2021, <www.leafly.com/news/industry/cannabis-jobs-report>



Industry Key Facts

A 2017 survey of the industry revealed that:

- **81% of marijuana business owners are white,**
- **4.3% of marijuana business owners are African-American,**
- **5.7% are Hispanic/Latino, 2.4% Asian, and 6.7% identify as other.**



STATE'S GOAL ASSUMPTION

Goal Assumption: A Desired Equitable Conclusion

These efforts must be both:

- **prospective**, the policy efforts to create a more inclusive legal marijuana industry, and
- **retrospective**, efforts to reinvest in communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs.

Every state must balance their marijuana law needs to escape from the shadow of discriminatory drug policies and work towards social justice and inclusion.



Where is Mississippi?

1. To this point, no visual recognition of need to address social and economic equity issues in previous proposed bills, initiative or hearings,
2. The state will have to deal with potential growth of black market in the communities affected the most by the inequities if you don't invest in those communities.
3. High probability of legal challenges to introduced cannabis regulation related to an unbalanced social and economic implementation.



Inequity Facts

1. Black men are imprisoned at a rate almost six times that of white men
2. Hispanic men are imprisoned at a rate of 2.7 times that of their white counterparts.
3. A study of marijuana arrests conducted by the **American Civil Liberties Union** revealed that on average blacks were 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than whites, despite comparable rates of marijuana use.
4. **State governments** have recognized the disjointed relationship between the financial opportunity of legalized marijuana and the damages of the "war on drugs." This recognition has resulted in the enactment of policies aimed at addressing this social justice issue in some states.



Options Not to Consider.....

California

In 2018, the **Cannabis Equity Act** was regarded as a progressive move forward toward achieving greater Black cannabis business ownership in the state, but it:

- Created a dual licensing system that requires local municipal authorization before businesses can obtain a state marijuana permit.
- Created high taxes that shrink profit margins and drive consumers to the illicit market. (Prop 64)
- Local control and bans, along with high taxes, have combined to offer those working outside the legal framework an opening to exploit: They can continue selling at a lower price point than licensed retailers and without much overhead.
- “Legalization was avoided by having local control in Prop 64,” said Kenny Morrison, president of the California Cannabis Manufacturers Association. “You can’t even call it legalization



Example to Consider..

Oklahoma

In Oklahoma, although social equity is not explicitly addressed in its medical legalization bill, the low licensing fees and unlimited number of licenses has led to a diverse applicant pool.



Best Example to Consider

Illinois

Today, Illinois is far and away providing the best social equity program framework in the nation.

Under current guidelines, applicants are eligible for increased assistance based on a variety of factors such as one's community resources, how much the applicant was affected by marijuana policing, And if the applicant will employ a majority of their workforce from war on drugs-affected areas.

All in all, the program is progressive where others are not, and is assisted by the state's cannabis tax provision which sends 25% of revenue grants designed to improve economic development in hard hit areas. Those who qualify for social equity programs can also submit applications for cannabis-business loans — a major breakthrough for diversifying business ownership.



Critical Factors to Success

**DO NOT IGNORE THE ISSUES,
LISTEN TO THE DATA,
VALUE THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHER STATES,
WE DO NOT FOLLOW THE TRACKS OF
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JOIN US!!

www.mymcca.org



Corporate Headquarters:

500 Dumas Avenue
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
(601) 297-5552

About Us

MMCA is a 501(c)6 non-profit which empower businesses through technical assistance to individuals and businesses, to reduced licensing fees or waived fees, assistance in recruitment, training, and retention of a qualified and diverse workforce, and business resilience such as emergency preparedness.

Mission Statement

To create equal access for cannabis businesses and promote economic empowerment for communities of color by creating policy considerations, social programming, and outreach initiatives to achieve equity for the communities most affected by the war on drugs.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to maximize our unique potential to serve as an economic accelerator, and creator of opportunities, and to improve critical social and health measures of all communities within the cannabis industry.

Signature Program

“Balanced Community Mississippi”

is an initiative by minority cannabis businesses to strategically recognize and formulate strategies by injecting funding into community programs which directly impact those disproportionately affected communities in the “War on Drugs” through mass incarcerations.

MMCA Statewide Initiative Top Priorities

- Develop a network of cannabis business owners within a variety of disciplines, including ancillary business.
- Advocate for creation and fair enforcement of sensible equitable policies
- Serve the minority population with programs that foster opportunity, and education.
- Promote social equity.

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Roderick Woullard
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Strategic Partners

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Recommendation to change Senate Amended HB119

1. Section 3 –Change lines 287-291 to “Minority group” shall mean an individual who is: African American male or female (not of Hispanic origin), American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hispanic including person of Mexican, Puerto Rican Cuban, Central or south American origin), and Pacific Islander.

(This will match the federal government definition. Women shall no longer be a minority protected class)

2. Section 3 (u) remove the word woman from the definition of “other minority group” (vs. Pacific Islander American, a woman or a serviceconnected veteran with a service-connected disability...)
3. Change Section 16(1) at lines 908-909 to read such that the number of licenses for cultivating-processing facilities and dispensaries shall not be limited for an individual
4. Change Section 16(2) at line 895-896 to provide for a cultivation processing facility license application fee of \$5,000 (vs. \$15,000).
5. Change Section 16(2) at line 899-900 to provide for a cultivationprocessing facility license annual renewal fee of \$2,500 (vs. \$8,000).

6. Section 16 (5) remove line 910-912, no pharmacist consultant should be required (vs. a pharmacist consultant who is a pharmacist). A Budtender service technician certification that is state certified issued to provide the consultant service in the dispensary.
7. Strike Section 16(7)(a)(vii) at lines 934-935 (vs. requiring that individual license applicants be free of any outstanding tax delinquency to the State of Mississippi).
8. Section 16(7) (2) at lines 947-949 replace the percentage with 45% of the equity ownership interest. (vs. 60 % of the equity ownership interest).
9. Change Section 16 (7) (2) replace line 939 with consecutive two (3) years (vs. 5 consecutive years).
10. REPLACE Section 16 (b)(3) lines 953-955 with the language as follows: "At least forty (40) percent of all licenses issued by MDAC for cultivation - processing facilities and for dispensaries, respectively, shall be issued to either individual owners who are members of minority groups as defined herein or to entity owners in which at least a simple majority of ownership is held by individuals who are members of minority groups as defined."
11. Strike Section 16(7)(b) ((iii))(8) at lines 971-974 (vs. requiring that owners of entity license applicants be free of any outstanding tax delinquency to the State of Mississippi).
12. Section 18 (10) (d) (11) remove pharmacy from the language on line 1129-1134,
13. Section 20 (1) (n) insert after line 1285 "Minority ownership shares"
14. Section 20(1) (m) insert after line item #13 (above) "African-American ownership shares"

15. Section 20(1) (m) insert after line item #14 (above) “Hispanic ownership shares”
(This will include information on every Minority percentage of ownership and overall African Americans and Hispanic ownership.
16. Section 25 (3) insert after line 1448 the percentage of licenses “applied for” annually by ethnic groups.
17. Section 25 (4) insert, after item #16 (above), the percentage of licenses “denied” annually by ethnic groups.
18. Change Section 30 (2) (c) on line 1497 to Section 30(2)(d)
19. Insert Section 30 (2) (c) line after 1496 to include “the next 25% of revenue generated shall be distributed to Department of Human Services for counseling programs, mental health program, early-release program and homeliness.