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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 158 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY RABB, BURGOS, KENYATTA, PARKER, HILL-EVANS,  
McNEILL, SCHLOSSBERG, SANCHEZ, HOHENSTEIN AND MADDEN,  
NOVEMBER 23, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, NOVEMBER 23, 2021

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States, President of the  
2 United States, Attorney General of the United States, Drug  
3 Enforcement Administration and Department of Health and Human  
4 Services to remove cannabis as a Schedule I controlled  
5 substance under the Controlled Substances Act.

6 WHEREAS, The Controlled Substances Act (Public Law 91-513, 84  
7 Stat. 1236) was enacted by the 91st Congress and became  
8 effective May 1, 1971; and

9 WHEREAS, Under the Controlled Substances Act, a Schedule I  
10 controlled drug or other substance is considered to have a high  
11 potential for abuse and dependence, no currently accepted  
12 medical use in treatment and a lack of accepted safety for use  
13 under medical supervision; and

14 WHEREAS, Cannabis is currently a Schedule I controlled drug  
15 or other substance under the Controlled Substances Act; and

16 WHEREAS, There are no exceptions under Federal law for the  
17 application of cannabis for medicinal purposes even if the use  
18 is sanctioned by State law; and

19 WHEREAS, As of May 2021, a total of 36 states and four

1 territories regulate cannabis for the recommendation,  
2 registration and dispensing for approved patients; and

3 WHEREAS, As of June 2021, at least 18 states, two territories  
4 and the District of Columbia have enacted legislation to  
5 regulate cannabis for adult use; and

6 WHEREAS, Scientific research has shown cannabis may be  
7 helpful in treating symptoms of epilepsy, nausea and vomiting  
8 associated with cancer chemotherapy, loss of appetite and weight  
9 loss associated with HIV/AIDS, chronic pain, multiple sclerosis,  
10 anxiety, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome,  
11 Tourette syndrome, posttraumatic stress disorder and sleep  
12 disorder; and

13 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has called for  
14 cannabis to be removed from the most restrictive category of the  
15 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961; and

16 WHEREAS, The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs  
17 voted to reclassify cannabis from the strict Schedule IV  
18 classification of the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs that  
19 includes dangerous and highly addictive drugs such as heroin;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Under the Controlled Substances Act, other Schedule  
22 I controlled substances include heroin, and Schedule II  
23 controlled substances include cocaine, methamphetamine,  
24 hydrocodone, oxycodone and fentanyl; and

25 WHEREAS, In 2019 alone, more than 36,000 Americans died from  
26 drug overdoses involving synthetic opioids, and the latest  
27 provisional drug overdose death counts through May 2020 suggest  
28 an acceleration of overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids  
29 during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

30 WHEREAS, Rescheduling cannabis will establish an important

1 step in harmonizing Federal and State policy to improve public  
2 health, reduce criminal justice expenditures, raise tax revenue  
3 and usher in economic growth; and

4 WHEREAS, Removing cannabis as a Schedule I controlled  
5 substance will facilitate medical research, ensure patient  
6 access and remove Federal prohibitions; and

7 WHEREAS, Billions in taxpayer dollars are spent every year in  
8 Federal expenditures attributable to cannabis prohibition  
9 enforcement in the criminal justice system; and

10 WHEREAS, Federal mandatory minimum sentencing laws for drug  
11 offenses result in nonviolent cannabis offenders serving long  
12 sentences often disproportionate to their crime; and

13 WHEREAS, The United States Attorney General can initiate a  
14 review process to consider available evidence and change a  
15 controlled substance's schedule classification; and

16 WHEREAS, Under this action, the Drug Enforcement  
17 Administration, in conjunction with the United States Department  
18 of Health and Human Services, would be directed to carry out a  
19 review process to reschedule a controlled substance, such as  
20 when the Drug Enforcement Administration rescheduled hydrocodone  
21 combination products or opioid-based prescription painkillers  
22 from Schedule III to Schedule II in 2014; and

23 WHEREAS, Congress has the authority to pass a law that  
24 changes or restricts a controlled substance's schedule  
25 classification; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
27 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
28 States, President of the United States, Attorney General of the  
29 United States, Drug Enforcement Administration and Department of  
30 Health and Human Services to remove cannabis as a Schedule I

1 controlled substance under the Controlled Substances Act; and be  
2 it further

3       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
4 the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each  
5 member of Congress from Pennsylvania, and to the President of  
6 the United States, the Attorney General of the United States,  
7 the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency and the  
8 Secretary of Health and Human Services.