

## **Maine Recreational Cannabis Laws**

Maine residents have voted to legalize marijuana for recreational use in their state.

Maine joins California, Nevada and Massachusetts, which passed similar measures this year. Arizona rejected a similar measure. Recreational marijuana was already legal in Colorado, Oregon, Washington and Alaska.

The final results on the referendum were tabulated on Thursday. The count took nearly two days because of how close the race was, within a fraction of a percentage point, and The Associated Press made the call Thursday afternoon.

Supporters had already declared themselves the winners and had predicted home cultivation of marijuana would be

legal by around Christmas.

People 21 or older will now be allowed to use up to 2 1/2 ounces of marijuana, and retail marijuana shops and social clubs could open around the state. Some municipalities have balked at allowing such businesses to open in their communities.

Opponents have vowed to request a recount.

Pending the recount, Maine joins California, Nevada and Massachusetts, which passed similar measures this year. Arizona rejected a similar measure. Recreational marijuana was already legal in Colorado, Oregon, Washington and Alaska.

In Maine, the proposal allows people to cultivate, distribute and sell marijuana and marijuana products. Marijuana is set to be

taxed at 10 percent and subject to local restrictions.

Parents' groups and some law enforcement organizations opposed the proposal. The proposal also received scrutiny from members of the medical marijuana community, who say they fear it could replace the state's medical program.

Question 1 asks voters if they want to legalize marijuana for adults 21 and over. If approved, adults would be allowed to possess up to 2.5 ounces, grow their own plants and buy marijuana from licensed retail stores. The initiative also would allow marijuana social clubs and place a 10 percent sales tax on marijuana. Marijuana use would be prohibited in public, with violations punishable by a \$100 fine.

In the weeks leading up to Election Day,

several Maine communities – including Westbrook, Portland and Saco – considered moratoriums on retail marijuana establishments to allow officials time to develop zoning regulations or outright bans on those types of businesses.

The marijuana legalization campaign drew much of its financial support from outside of Maine. The Campaign to Regulate Marijuana in Maine – the Yes on 1 campaign – raised \$2.4 million, including nearly \$2.2 million from the Washington, D.C.-based New Approach PAC backed by a small group of philanthropists. Mainers Protecting Our Youth and Communities, which opposes Question 1, raised about \$201,000 in campaign donations, including \$200,000 from a Virginia nonprofit called Alliance for Health Marijuana Policy.

A second opposition group, Maine Matters

Vote No, raised just under \$12,000 to fight the initiative. Most of that money came from medical marijuana caregivers, according to campaign finance reports.

## **END MARIJUANA PROHIBITION**

The initiative allows adults 21 years of age and older to possess a limited amount of marijuana, grow a limited number of marijuana plants in their homes, and possess the marijuana produced by those plants. It will remain illegal to use marijuana in public.

## **REGULATE MARIJUANA**

The initiative establishes a tightly regulated system of licensed marijuana retail stores, cultivation facilities, product-manufacturing facilities, and testing facilities, and it creates rules governing the production, testing,

transportation, and sale of marijuana and marijuana-related products (e.g. testing, labeling, and packaging requirements). Cities and towns will have the right to prohibit the operation of marijuana establishments.

## **TAX MARIJUANA**

The initiative enacts a 10% tax on adult-use marijuana sales, which will be used to implement and enforce regulations. Any remaining funds will be used by the legislature to benefit the citizens of Maine. Medical marijuana sales will NOT be subjected to the 10% sales tax.

To get a job in, or start a cannabis business in Maine go to:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/mmm/index.shtml>

