

NEWS RELEASE

Public Information Department
County of Warren
(908) 475-6580
www.co.warren.nj.us



Warren County Freeholders Vote to Oppose Recreational Marijuana

(WHITE TOWNSHIP, NJ – November 28, 2018) – The Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders took a stand opposing all efforts by the New Jersey Legislature to legalize marijuana for recreational use, unanimously passing a resolution that also encouraged the County’s municipalities to enact ordinances preventing marijuana facilities within their borders.

“They’re pushing it through pretty darn quick,” Freeholder Jason J. Sarnoski, who introduced the resolution, said of the state Legislature. Sarnoski said he worked with members of the county’s Addiction Awareness Task Force to draft the resolution, noting he and his fellow freeholders had wanted to wait until bills were actually under consideration in Trenton before acting in opposition to the proposal.

Sarnoski added that the proposed bills, S-2703 and A-4497, if signed into law would give municipalities just 180 days to enact an ordinance prohibiting the operation of marijuana establishment within their borders, after which they would automatically opt in for five years. That’s not enough time “to get the pulse of the town” or to put the question to a referendum, Sarnoski said.

“I think it’s just an accident waiting to happen,” Freeholder Richard D. Gardner said of allowing recreational marijuana use. “It’s very bad.”

Freeholder Director Edward J. Smith said the proposed legislature is “another example of the state in decline” as the Legislature would be “doing this for money without thinking about the social costs.” But the counties would have to deal with the social impacts of the state’s decision, he added.

The freeholder board’s resolution states that while it has been purported that legalization of marijuana “may provide substantial revenue to the State of New Jersey through taxes that would be established within the legislation,” the revenue calculation “does not take into consideration the social costs of widespread marijuana use.”

Although counties don’t have any say in whether a municipality opts in or out on having a marijuana establishment within their borders, Sarnoski noted, “We can state our opinion.” The County will send the approved resolution “to all the pertinent people to let them know our feeling on this,” Sarnoski said.

###