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**The City of New York**  
**Manhattan Community Board 8**

**HEALTH, SENIORS & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**New York Blood Center**  
**310 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street (First-Second)**  
**Auditorium**  
**Tuesday, May 26, 2015**  
**6:30PM**

**Committee Members Present:** Jacqueline Ludorf

**Committee Members Excused:** Lorraine Johnson, David Liston, Ellen Polivy, Hattie Quarnstrom-Figueroa, Barbara Rudder

**Community Board 8 Members Present:** Zoe Markowitz, Glen Pandolfino, David Rosenstein

**Public Members Present:** Jeffrey Ascherman

**1. Discussion on Sen. Liz Krueger's Marijuana Tax and Regulate Bill**

Sen. Liz Krueger first introduced The Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (S.1747/A.3089-A) in 2013 and reintroduced with amendments at the beginning of the 2015 session, where it was referred to the Finance Committee. The Assembly version of the bill is carried by Assembly Member Crystal Peoples Stokes and is currently in the Assembly Codes Committee.

Sen. Krueger's aide, Patrick Madigan, provided the committee with an overview of the bill, acknowledging that it was unlikely to move quickly through the state legislature but he presented a persuasive argument, supported by extensive research, that the present criminalization of possession of marijuana has had a catastrophic impact on inner city youth and young adults.

He cited, among others, the widely noted research by Harry G. Levine, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Queens College and the Graduate Center, CUNY, that was central to the recent review and revisions to the NYPD's Stop, Question & Frisk policies.

While there were no other formal speakers -- it was not a debate forum -- there were no members of the public who actively opposed it, though one physician expressed concern that any smoked product was going to present health concerns. It should be noted there were less than 20 attendees so it was far from a community consensus. Those who did speak supported changes ranging from expansion of medical marijuana to total decriminalization.

One attendee, Mr. Jack A. Cole, identified himself as a retired state trooper representing Law Enforcement Against Prohibition. Others were from an advocacy group supporting legalization of cannabis.

After some discussion, the five CB8M members present agreed that, given this bill had little chance of passage in the near future and would be revised repeatedly in the sessions to come if it is allowed to be discussed at all in the NYS legislature, and that the present prohibition and uncertain rollout of medical marijuana in New York State, this bill at least presented a vehicle to get Albany to begin a discussion of marijuana regulation, one that is taking place across the nation's state legislatures.

**Resolution:**

**Whereas** the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (S.1747/A.3089-A), introduced by Sen. Liz Krueger, which would legalize, regulate and tax marijuana under state law along lines similar to the state's current system regulating alcohol, as well as the legalization models being implemented in Colorado and Washington, is presently in the NYS Senate's Finance Committee and the NYS Assembly's Codes Committee respectively; and

**Whereas** cannabis (marijuana) is categorized under Title 21 United States Code (USC) Controlled Substances Act ("CSA"), as a Schedule I drug, one with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse -- Schedule I drugs are the most dangerous drugs of all the drug schedules with potentially severe psychological or physical dependence --; and

**Whereas** this Schedule I status under the CSA severely limits medical research into both risks and benefits of cannabis use and abuse; and

**Whereas** this federal restriction is unlikely to change in the near future absent significant upward pressure from state legislatures, of which 23 have enacted some expansion of cannabis use; and

**Whereas** the federal code's criteria for Schedule I status of cannabis is being increasingly challenged by medical researchers and clinicians as well as legal, correctional and criminal justice professionals concerned about the impact of arrests for marijuana possession on young men, particularly African-American and Hispanic inner city males and the overall U.S. prison population, one of the highest per capita in the world; and

**Whereas** the proposed legislation at least provides an opportunity for the New York State legislature to begin what is likely to be a lengthy exploration of how the State of New York will ultimately address the issue of medical and recreational use of cannabis;

**Therefore be it resolved** that Community Board #8 Manhattan urges its elected officials to support the Senate Finance and Assembly Codes Committee's consideration of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (S.1747/A.3089-A) so that the full Senate and Assembly may begin a serious discussion of this matter.

**Vote: 4-0-0 In Favor - Ascherman, Ludorf, Pandolfino, and Rosenstein**

**David Liston and Jackie Ludorf  
Co-Chairs, Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee**