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Senator Cliff Pirtle Introduces Legislation to Legalize Adult Use of Cannabis in New Mexico

SANTA FE – Senator Cliff Pirtle (District 32-Chavez, Eddy, and Otero) today introduced legislation to legalize cannabis for adult use in New Mexico. Senate Bill 288 (SB 288) would provide for the regulated, taxed sale and manufacturing of retail cannabis. The retail tax would be shared among municipalities, counties, and state governments for law enforcement and behavioral health and substance abuse programs.

“There is growing bipartisan agreement that prohibition has not been effective in limiting and controlling the negative effects of cannabis,” said Senator Pirtle. “This proposal represents a pragmatic compromise that emphasizes public safety, while giving New Mexicans the personal liberty to make decisions for themselves.”

Like alcohol, the excessive use of cannabis has proven to pose significant negative personal, economic, and societal challenges. To promote safe and responsible use, SB 288 proposes the creation of the Cannabis Control Commission, a state agency that will among other things regulate production, manage retail distribution, set quality control and consumer protection standards, and protect employers' rights to a drug-free workforce.

“We want to do everything we can to ensure that cannabis is used only by adults in a safe and responsible manner,” added Senator Pirtle. “Legalization is coming, and as a state, we must get ahead of the issue and pass legislation that does not harm our communities.”

SB 288 was referred first to the Senate Tax, Business, and Transportation Committee.

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