

SENATE OF VIRGINIA



THOMAS K. NORMENT, JR.
3RD SENATORIAL DISTRICT
ALL OF GLOUCESTER, KING AND QUEEN, KING
WILLIAM, AND NEW KENT COUNTIES; ALL OF THE
CITY OF POQUOSON; PART OF ISLE OF WIGHT,
JAMES CITY, SURRY, AND YORK
COUNTIES; AND PART OF THE CITIES OF
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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
FINANCE, Co-CHAIR
COMMERCE AND LABOR
COURTS OF JUSTICE
RULES

November 30, 2016

The Honorable Robert B. Bell
Virginia State Crime Commission, Chairman
1111 E Broad St Ste B036
Richmond VA 23219

Dear Delegate Bell:

I am writing to request the Virginia State Crime Commission undertake a study examining a future change to the Code of Virginia regarding criminal penalties related to possession of small amounts of marijuana. Specifically, I envision the study examining:

- Consequences experienced by any state that has changed the emphasis of its laws regarding possession of small amounts of marijuana from criminal to civil penalties.
- Contemporary research related to marijuana and its effects on users, especially any studies indicating a correlation between its usage and that of opioids or illegal stimulants (methamphetamine and cocaine) as a possible “gateway” drug.
- The status and strength of current Virginia law related to driving under the influence of marijuana, and the efficacy of existing available technology related to the detection of such use that is admissible in criminal proceedings.
- Requirements by the federal government and its agencies related to the Commonwealth’s laws and enforcement of criminal penalties for marijuana possession, including any potential ramifications to the Commonwealth if its laws were in conflict with current federal statutes and regulations related to marijuana enforcement.
- Examining if states that have decriminalized possession of marijuana continue to criminalize it on second or third offenses.

I would greatly appreciate any additional input, suggestions, or concerns you may have related to the conduct of such a study by the Virginia State Crime Commission, which we can discuss at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration of this request. If I may

offer any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. With kindest regards, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas K. Norment, Jr.", written in black ink.

Thomas K. Norment, Jr.

CC: Mrs. Kristen Howard, Executive Director