



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM37.19	ACTION			Ward: All
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Breaking the Habit on Cannabis Retail Licensing - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paula Fletcher

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paula Fletcher, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse Member of Provincial Parliament Marit Stiles's Private Members' Bill 29, entitled "An Act to Amend the Cannabis Licence Act, 2018".
2. City Council direct the Clerk to convey City Council's endorsement of the above Bill to the Province of Ontario.
3. City Council request the Ontario Government to place a moratorium on the issues of new cannabis licenses and retailers in Toronto for one year or until Bill 29 is successfully adopted.

Summary

Cannabis is a legal, regulated product that should be available in ways that meet community needs. But under current laws, some communities have few legal cannabis shops, while others are seeing increasing concentrations of them that risk the diversity of our main streets.

Currently, the Provincial legislation governing the retail of cannabis doesn't give municipalities a say in where cannabis shops can open, how many can be in a given area or how close they can be to one another. That's left some areas in Toronto with no cannabis retail at all, while in others, a proliferation of stores clustered together is threatening the diversity of our main streets.

There is an existing mechanism that allows Municipalities to give feedback on the sale of controlled substances. Currently, to serve/sell alcohol in Toronto you need a liquor licence from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. You may also need documentation from the City to support your application to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario for certain licences. This process could and should apply to cannabis retailers as well.

Currently a Private Members Bill, Bill 29, has been tabled to amend the Cannabis Licence Act,

2018 to align the cannabis licensing process with that of liquor licensing, allowing municipalities to have a greater say in where, and how many, cannabis licenses can be issued.

Bill 29 amends the Cannabis Licensing Act to:

- Align the process for new cannabis retail licenses with that used for liquor licenses.
- Give municipalities and, through them, the local community, a greater say in the licensing process.
- Ensure access to legal cannabis is maintained without pushing out diverse businesses that make our local economies thrive.

Bill 29 Passed first reading on Tuesday October 26, 2021, and City Council has the opportunity to endorse this amendment before further debate.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM37.19