

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION No. 125**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Urges states to support cannabis equity programs.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



- 1   **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging states to support cannabis  
2       equity programs.  
3
- 4   **WHEREAS**, Thirty-three states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico,  
5       and Guam have all adopted laws allowing legal access to cannabis;  
6       and  
7   **WHEREAS**, Eleven states and the District of Columbia have adopted  
8       laws allowing for the adult recreational use of cannabis; and  
9   **WHEREAS**, Over 650,000 Americans were arrested for cannabis-  
10      related offenses in 2017, and 90 percent of those were arrested for  
11      mere possession; and  
12   **WHEREAS**, The burdens of arrests, convictions, and long-term  
13      collateral consequences arising from a conviction fell  
14      disproportionately on Black and Latino populations because  
15      cannabis was illegal; and  
16   **WHEREAS**, People who are Black or Latino make up nearly 47 percent  
17      of those arrested for drug law violations despite making up 31.5  
18      percent of the American population; and  
19   **WHEREAS**, Drug arrests and convictions have had a devastating  
20      impact on communities across the United States, particularly in  
21      communities of color; and  
22   **WHEREAS**, Persons convicted of drug-related offenses and their  
23      families suffer the long-term consequences; and  
24   **WHEREAS**, Black and Latino individuals have a more difficult time  
25      entering newly created adult-use cannabis markets, due in part, to a  
26      lack of access to capital, business space, technical support and  
27      regulatory compliance assistance; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, Only six states currently recognize social equity within the  
29      regulated cannabis industry and offer programs or support for  
30      cannabis equity; and  
31   **WHEREAS**, Cannabis equity programs are necessary to reduce barriers  
32      to entering the cannabis industry for persons and communities most  
33      impacted; and  
34   **WHEREAS**, Cannabis equity programs provide a wide range of services  
35      and resources such as technical assistance between state and local  
36      governments, financial support, priority processing of licenses,  
37      licensing fee waivers and deferrals, and other help for owners and  
38      employers from communities most harmed by the decades long war  
39      on drugs; and  
40   **WHEREAS**, Cannabis equity programs help ensure that business  
41      ownership and employment are diverse, reflective of the local  
42      demographics and inclusive to all; and  
43   **WHEREAS**, Support for local equity programs will not only help  
44      diversify the emerging cannabis market, it will also improve the

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 growth of small businesses and directly benefit low-income,  
2 disadvantaged communities; and  
3 **WHEREAS**, While some states prioritize social equity within the  
4 cannabis industry, there is still a critical need for further assistance  
5 to those faced with the greatest challenges to licensure and the  
6 legalized, regulated market; and  
7 **WHEREAS**, Cannabis equity programs increase public health and  
8 safety by encouraging individuals and groups that have been or may  
9 be operating illegally to enter the regulated marketplace; and  
10 **WHEREAS**, Cannabis equity programs will increase the opportunities  
11 for more individuals to participate and contribute to their state and  
12 local economies' legal market, and support owners and operators so  
13 they have a chance to sustain a successful business; now, therefore,  
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15 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*  
16 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*  
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18 1. The New Jersey General Assembly urges all states that have  
19 legalized cannabis in some form to support cannabis equity  
20 programs.  
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22 2. Copies of this resolution, as file with the Secretary of State,  
23 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the  
24 Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States Senate,  
25 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each member of  
26 Congress elected thereto from New Jersey and the presiding officer  
27 of each house of each state legislature in the United States.  
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30 STATEMENT  
31

32 This concurrent resolution urges all states that have legalized  
33 cannabis in some form to support cannabis equity programs.