

96th House District

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**Committees**

Civil Justice
Constitutional Resolutions

Ron Ferguson
State Representative

December 14, 2023

The Honorable Mike DeWine
77 S. High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

I am writing to express my disappointment in Ohio House Speaker Jason Stephens' failure to act on revisions to Ohio's new adult use marijuana statute. Since the passing of Issue 2 on November 7th, there has been clear bipartisan support to maintain the will of the voters, while installing additional guardrails to ensure public safety. Despite numerous calls from you and countless Ohioans to pass necessary changes by Issue 2's December 7th effective date, Speaker Stephens failed to pass any legislation before the House concluded its last session until January. The Senate put forth their revisions on December 6th with a bipartisan 29-2 vote. I personally put forth a floor amendment on three separate bills during the House's December 13th Session which included many of the provisions legislators and Ohioans have discussed over the past few weeks including:

1. Ensuring marijuana advertisements are at least as stringent to those regulating tobacco and alcohol to ensure marijuana is not marketed towards children.
2. Prohibiting individuals from using cannabis in public places by applying existing guardrails which exist for tobacco products.
3. Permitting existing medical marijuana dispensaries to sell marijuana immediately to adults who may legally possess it, in order to discourage the black market.

These provisions had bicameral and bipartisan support and wide support from both those who voted 'Yes' on Issue 2 and those who voted 'No' on Issue 2 and enough backing to ensure an emergency clause. Speaker Stephens had no interest in discussing these amendments nor recognizing me on the floor to debate them. I assure you me and my colleagues stand ready to tackle this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ron Ferguson", is written over a horizontal line.

Representative Ron Ferguson
Ohio House District 96