

November 2018

wage will mean more money in their pockets to spend downtown, which will help keep our local economies strong.

Opioid epidemic

We are putting in place new strategies, based on statistical research and careful data analysis, to focus our efforts and combat this at its roots. We are not yet close to declaring victory, but every day, we inch a little bit closer.

Any notion that tackling this epidemic has become a lesser priority is completely and utterly wrong-headed. Solving this is a daily, evidence-based grind.

Adult use marijuana

I remain equally committed to sensible legislation to legalize adult use marijuana, and to continue to expand our medical marijuana program, which can also be an important tool to fighting our opioid epidemic.

I know that some of you have already taken steps in your communities to prevent such sales once I sign a legalization bill into law—and, make no mistake, assuming the Legislature gets it to me, I will.

Our current prohibition has utterly failed. We have branded countless thousands of our fellow residents—mostly residents of color—as criminals for low-level possession crimes, impeding their ability to get jobs or an education. These crimes have crowded our jails, while leaving the bad guys in place on the street corner.

Legalization is the right thing to do, for safer communities, for protecting our kids, for erasing the stain that is keeping so many of our fellow New Jerseyans from a better future. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of New Jerseyans agree. We should listen to them. I am ready to work alongside the Legislature, and each of you, to get this done.

Please remember, if you remain skeptical—we are not inventing marijuana. What we are doing is restoring social justice, putting the bad guys out of business, protecting our kids, and regulating and taxing the industry as we should.

One New Jersey

One of the things that makes New Jersey special is that we are a state of 565 unique municipalities. It may not make governing easy. And, throughout the year I have been reminded that we will never have perfect agreement on anything.

That's to be expected. But, if we take the time to listen to each other, and reach across borders as we reach across the aisle, we can do great things as one New Jersey.

I thank you for all you do for your communities, and for our state. And, I look forward to working alongside you in the year to come! 🇯🇵

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