



March 25, 2019

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker
New York State Assembly
932 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248

RE: FY2020 Budget Proposal - Legalization of Recreational Marijuana

Dear Speaker Heastie:

On behalf of the Capital Region Chamber, representing 2,400 businesses and organizations from throughout the Capital Region that employ more than 150,000 area residents, I would greatly appreciate it if you would consider the Chamber's perspective regarding the above referenced proposal as you conclude deliberations on the Executive Budget.

The Chamber has not taken a position on the proposal to legalize recreational marijuana. However, the Chamber strongly opposes the inclusion of public policy issues, such as a proposal to legalize recreational marijuana, as part of the budget. These substantive policy issues should be submitted as stand-alone bills, thoughtfully reviewed, debated and subject to public hearings and public comment.

As you are aware, several concerns regarding the proposal to legalize recreational marijuana have been raised by many stakeholders, including members of the business community. Good public policy, on this or any substantive policy issue, can only be crafted after allowing for a thoughtful and deliberate process in which all stakeholders' concerns are fully considered and addressed.

The Chamber respectfully requests that you work with your Assembly colleagues and the Executive Chamber to ensure that the proposal to legalize recreational marijuana is removed from consideration during budget negotiations.

Thank you for your consideration of the Chamber's perspective on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thomas J. O'Connor', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas J. O'Connor
Vice President, Government Relations

cc: Capital Region NYS Assembly Delegation

At the Center of New York's Tech Valley
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