



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## State Legislature Passes Senator Hinchey and Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes Bill to Fast-Track Cannabis Production in New York

MICHELLE HINCHEY February 17, 2022

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## State Legislature Passes Senator Hinchey and Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes Bill to Fast-Track Cannabis Production in New York



**ALBANY, NY** – The State Legislature this week passed a bill sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes creating a pathway for hemp growers to obtain temporary conditional licenses to produce adult-use cannabis to meet the demand of New York’s forthcoming legal market. The bill ([S8084A/A9283](#)) authorizes the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) to issue conditional cannabis cultivator and

processor licenses to existing hemp growers to ensure that when dispensaries open, a variety of New York products can enter the marketplace on day one of retail sales. Conditional licenses will expire on June 30, 2024, at which point all cultivators and processors must operate under the standard license developed by OCM.

The measure will also create a Social Equity Mentorship Program to provide emerging social and economic equity cultivators and processors, including BIPOC growers, minority- and women-owned business owners, and service-disabled veterans with a pathway to licensure through invaluable knowledge gained by partnering with experienced hemp cultivators and processors. Under the bill, an Environmental Sustainability Program will also be created to provide conditional licensees with information on best practices for ecologically-sound cultivation.

**Senator Michelle Hinchey said,** “Last year, with the historic passage of the MRTA, New York set the foundation for a legal cannabis industry predicated on social equity, inclusion, and ensuring that economic success stays local. To achieve these goals and create a truly circular economy, we need New York farmers to begin the growing process now so that when cannabis dispensaries open, we can fill shelves with quality New York-grown products. Our existing hemp growers, who have been some of the hardest hit by market fluctuations, already have the knowledge base to meet this need, and I’m proud to sponsor legislation to help them obtain conditional licenses, which will allow New York to implement its cannabis program faster. My bill will also help advance the critical social equity goals laid out in the MRTA by establishing a mentorship program that brings more BIPOC growers into the fold to strengthen diversity in agriculture and deliver opportunities for all who want to be part of this exciting space. New York can lead the nation by building our cannabis industry as a pillar of progress, and I thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and my colleagues

for advancing this legislation.”

**Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes said,** “Last year, after many years of fighting, we finally enacted the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act, and are beginning to undo the devastating impacts over ninety years of unequal enforcement of marijuana prohibition had on too many lives and communities. MRTA ensures that the legal adult-use market will be centered on equity and economic justice for communities of color and individuals that have been harmed most by the War on Drugs in the State of New York. With the passage of this bill, we have the opportunity to create a responsible start to the adult-use cannabis industry by authorizing temporary conditional cultivator and processor licenses to current New York hemp farmers. This authority will help secure enough safe, regulated, and environmentally conscious cannabis products to meet the demand of the adult-use cannabis market when retail dispensaries open. Importantly, this legislation calls for a Social Equity Mentorship Program, which will create a viable and inclusive path for social and economic equity partners interested in cannabis cultivation and processing to gain invaluable knowledge and experience in this emerging industry. The temporary conditional licenses authorized by this bill will ultimately help realize the vision and goals of the MRTA”

“Last year we diligently did our work to ensure the MRTA legislation we enacted addressed correctly the racial disparities that have plagued our state’s response to marijuana use,”

**Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said.** “While retail operations are still being established, we know that there are individuals already active in the production of cannabis products, and by allowing the Cannabis Control Board to issue these licenses we are providing for the market to open safely and faster on the retail side.”

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RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2021-S8084A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Provides for conditional adult-use cultivator licenses and conditional adult-use processor licenses

January 25, 2022

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Michelle Hinchey**

Do you support this bill?

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