

DRAFT RESOLUTION Re: Recreational Cannabis

WHEREAS, On November 7, 2023, the majority of the electorate of the State of Ohio adopted Issue 2 enacting Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3780 wherein the cultivation, processing, sale, purchase, possession, home grow and use of recreational marijuana by adults over the age of 21 is permitted; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the electorate of Richland County, Ohio opposed the adoption of Issue 2; and

WHEREAS, The National Institutes of Health, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, and World Health Organization have all determined that marijuana is an addictive drug and can produce dependency and withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, Since 2007, drug overdoses have been the leading cause of injury death in Ohio, and 33,000 Ohioans have died of drug overdoses between 2011 and 2020; and

WHEREAS, Marijuana is a "gateway" drug, and research shows that four out of ten regular marijuana users go on to experiment with other drugs; and

WHEREAS, Regular marijuana use more than doubles the risk of developing opioid-use disorder or initiating nonmedical prescription opioid use; and

WHEREAS, Regular marijuana use can irreversibly reduce intelligence, memory, and learning ability; and

WHEREAS, The increased availability of marijuana from legalization correlates with an alarming increase in emergency room visits for children due to marijuana ingestion, particularly by the youngest children; and

WHEREAS, The human brain continues to develop until approximately the age of 25, and regular marijuana use during adolescence and up to this age can change the way the brain functions in adulthood, risking impacts to academic performance, IQ, and behavior; and

WHEREAS, Marijuana use in adolescence is associated with an increased risk of psychosis, a severe mental disorder characterized by distorted thinking and a loss of touch with reality, as well as depression and suicide; and

WHEREAS, States that have legalized recreational marijuana have seen an increase in fatal traffic crashes and injury-causing traffic crashes, with marijuana-impaired driving fatalities doubling in Colorado and Washington, the first two states to legalize recreational marijuana; and

WHEREAS, States that have legalized recreational marijuana have seen increases in their crimes rates, with the crime rate in Colorado, one of the first states to legalize recreational marijuana increasing 11 times faster than the rest of the nation since legalization, including an 18.6% increase in violent crimes; and

WHEREAS, States that have legalized recreational marijuana have still seen significant sales of

unregulated, black market marijuana, with Oregon seeing 70% of all marijuana sales being on the black market and up to five times the amount of marijuana purchased in the state being taken out of the state for illegal sales elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, Legalizing recreational marijuana creates great risks at the workplace to employers, other workers, customers, and others; and

WHEREAS, Other states that have legalized recreational marijuana have seen significant increases in workers who show up to work impaired, including an increase of 48% in Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Marijuana-impaired employees cause 55% more industrial accidents and 85% more on-the-job injuries, and employees who regularly use marijuana experience 75% more absenteeism; and

WHEREAS, Increased workplace accidents will inevitably create new cost pressures for Ohio's stable workers compensation system, leading one member of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation Board of Directors to recently say that he expects legalization of recreational marijuana to drive up rates; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the council members of the _____ conclude that it is our community's best interests to prevent unacceptable threats and risks to the health of our citizens, especially children, to prevent dangers in the workplace and unacceptable challenges and costs to employers, to prevent roadways from becoming more dangerous, and to help prevent significant new, unfunded costs to Ohio's public social services; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we, the council members of the _____ agree to pass an emergency resolution beginning on the date _____ prohibiting the issuance of building permits certificates of occupancy, zoning permits, and/or any other permits to any person or entity for any building, structure use, or change of use that would enable the cultivation, processing or retail, sale of recreational marijuana, and in so doing preserve and protect our community's high quality of life, the health and safety of our citizens, the strength and the prosperity of our communities.