

[117H6129]



(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to States and units of local government to reduce the financial and administrative burden of expunging convictions for cannabis offenses, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to States and units of local government to reduce the financial and administrative burden of expunging convictions for cannabis offenses, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Harnessing Opportuni-  
5 ties by Pursuing Expungement Act of 2023” or the  
6 “HIOPE Act of 2023”.

1   **SEC. 2. STATE EXPUNGEMENT OPPORTUNITY GRANT PRO-**  
2                   **GRAM.**

3       (a) NAME OF PROGRAM.—The grant program estab-  
4   lished under this section shall be known as the “State  
5   Expungement Opportunity Grant Program”.

6       (b) AUTHORIZATION.—The Attorney General is au-  
7   thorized to make grants to States and units of local gov-  
8   ernment to reduce the financial and administrative burden  
9   of expunging convictions for cannabis offenses that are  
10  available to individuals who have been convicted of such  
11  offenses under the laws of the State.

12      (c) APPLICATION.—The chief executive of a State or  
13  unit of local government seeking a grant under this section  
14  shall submit to the Attorney General an application at  
15  such time, in such manner, and containing such informa-  
16  tion as the Attorney General may reasonably require.

17      (d) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants under this section shall  
18  be used—

19           (1) for technology to provide cost-effective legal  
20   relief at scale;

21           (2) to automate the process of expunging con-  
22   victions for cannabis offenses;

23           (3) for clinics, including legal clinics, that assist  
24   individuals through the expungement process;

25           (4) to implement the notice requirement de-  
26   scribed in subsection (e);

1 (5) to seal records of conviction for cannabis of-  
2 fenses, if appropriate; and

3 (6) for other innovative partnerships to provide  
4 wide-scale relief to individuals who are eligible for  
5 the expungement of a conviction for a cannabis of-  
6 fense under the laws of the State.

7 (e) NOTICE REQUIREMENT.—A jurisdiction that re-  
8 ceives a grant under this section shall—

9 (1) publish on a publicly accessible website in-  
10 formation about the availability and process of  
11 expunging convictions for cannabis offenses, includ-  
12 ing information for individuals living in a different  
13 jurisdiction who were convicted of a cannabis offense  
14 in that jurisdiction;

15 (2) implement a process to notify each indi-  
16 vidual convicted of a cannabis offense when—

17 (A) the expungement process has begun;  
18 and

19 (B) when the expungement is complete,  
20 which shall, if applicable, include an official cer-  
21 tificate of expungement (including any other  
22 similar document used by the jurisdiction).

23 (f) REPORT.—A jurisdiction that receives a grant  
24 under this section shall submit to the Attorney General  
25 a report describing the uses of such funds, and how many

1 convictions for cannabis offenses have been expunged  
2 using such funds.

3 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
4 authorized to be appropriated \$2,000,000 to carry out this  
5 section for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2033.

6 **SEC. 3. STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES**  
7 **RELATED TO CANNABIS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the  
9 date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall  
10 conduct a study and submit to Congress and make pub-  
11 licly available on the website of the Department of Justice  
12 a report on—

13 (1) the effects of the appearance on an individ-  
14 ual's criminal record report of a conviction for a  
15 criminal offense related to cannabis, including—

16 (A) disqualifying him or her from future  
17 opportunities in housing and employment;

18 (B) increasing the likelihood that the indi-  
19 vidual will have future involvement with the  
20 criminal justice system;

21 (C) how any such effects differ based on  
22 demographics, including race; and

23 (D) any other matters determined appro-  
24 priate by the Attorney General; and

1           (2) the costs incurred by States for incarcer-  
2       ating an individual convicted for a criminal offense  
3       related to cannabis.

4       (b) CLARIFICATION.—The report under subsection  
5 (a) may not include any personally identifiable informa-  
6 tion.

7 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

8       In this Act:

9           (1) The term “cannabis” means either mari-  
10       juana or cannabis as defined under the State law  
11       authorizing the sale or use of cannabis in which the  
12       individual or entity is located.

13          (2) The term “cannabis offense” means a  
14       criminal offense related to cannabis that, under  
15       State law, is no longer an offense or that was des-  
16       ignated a lesser offense or for which the penalty was  
17       reduced under State law pursuant to or following  
18       the adoption of a State law authorizing the sale or  
19       use of cannabis.