



Pennsylvania Department of the

**AUDITOR GENERAL**

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## News for Immediate Release

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### **Auditor General DePasquale Praises Erie City Council's Vote to Reduce Penalties for Possession of Small Amounts of Marijuana**

**HARRISBURG** – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today issued the following statement on Erie City Council's final vote to reduce penalties for possession of small amounts of marijuana:

"Erie City Council's vote to decriminalize small amounts of marijuana is responsible and just. The time has long past for Pennsylvania in its entirety to cease treating the possession of a small amount of weed as a criminal offense. Erie now joins Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, State College and York in realizing that decriminalizing marijuana is just common sense.

"As I have said before, decriminalization is a cost-saver. Millions of dollars are spent each year on marijuana prosecutions. What's more, decriminalization also has human benefits by reducing the loss of income and other social, personal and emotional impacts on those arrested for simply possessing a small amount of marijuana.

"Congratulations to Erie for doing the right thing. I urge other municipalities – and ultimately the entire commonwealth – to do the same and end the antiquated 'Reefer Madness' political ideology on marijuana."

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