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W.Va. Senate passes medical cannabis bill, moves on to House of Delegates

By KYLEE HURLEY
THE PARthenon

The West Virginia Senate voted on Wednesday to pass Senate Bill 386, also known as the Creating WV Medical Cannabis Act. The legislation is an opportunity for us to pass historic legislation that will affect the residents of West Virginia for years to come, said Sen. Richard Ojeda, D-Logan.

The text of the bill can be found on the West Virginia Legislature website, where it outlines the guidelines for who is allowed to administer and obtain the medical cannabis. According to the webcam video of the West Virginia Legislature website, the bill held a large number of sponsors.

The West Virginia Senate Roll Call shows SB 386 passed by a large majority, with a 28-6 vote. The bill outlines the creation of the West Virginia Medical Cannabis Commission, which will consist of a variety of professionals who would be in charge of the funding. According to the bill, "annually ten percent of the funds generated from licensing medical cannabis use and supporting controlled substance and alcohol recovery programs." The text of the bill found on the West Virginia Legislature website states medical conditions the commission will consider for use.

Mike Rhyner, a mental health specialist at the Marshall University Counseling Center, weighed in on the effects of medical marijuana or anti-anxiety medication, because I truly believe in addressing all aspects of health rather than simply one. Tennika Phillips, who is a mental health specialist at the Marshall University counseling center, weighed in on the effects of medical marijuana or anti-anxiety medication, because I truly believe in addressing all aspects of health rather than simply one.

"It’s always one of the best days of the year for the Marshall family because we all really get to come together — students, faculty, staff and alumni — and celebrate Marshall and share the Marshall story with the Legislature and the governor," Ginny Painter, vice president of communications, said.

The Legislature is considering cutting funding to Marshall and other universities in West Virginia due to the state’s financial crisis and budget deficit. MU Day at the Capitol allows lawmakers to see where funding to higher education goes and the positive effects that it has on the state’s students.

"I think that the Legislature and the governor understand the importance of higher education and I think that we were really able to demonstrate that today through displays, exhibits, plays and interactive activities really what the investment in higher education does in West Virginia," Painter said. "I absolutely think it was a lot of progress today." Jarvis also said allowing state lawmakers to interact with students and activities that are made possible by funding from the state.

Sen. Richard Ojeda, D-Lon, is the lead sponsor of Senate Bill 386 which would legalize medical marijuana in West Virginia. Ojeda is a veteran and brought dog tags to the session Wednesday night when the bill was passed.

By ADAM STEPHENS
THE PARTHENON

Marshall University students, faculty and staff spent the morning at the state capital building in Charleston Thursday to celebrate Marshall University Day at the Capitol, an event that showcases the different colleges, programs and activities that Marshall has to offer and why continued financial support from the Legislature is crucial. "Any time that we have the opportunity to bring our students on trips, especially to our capital where the state Legislature is and where those laws that ultimately affect them are happening and to do it on Marshall Day at the Capitol is just an even better opportunity," Marshall Student Body President Matt Jarvis said.

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Huntington Mayor Steve Williams (left) speaks to a student at a clinic with the Mayor. This is an opportunity to allow students to speak with the mayor in an informal setting.

We had a meeting with the community members last Thursday and I have to say it was the most exciting meeting I’ve ever been to in my life,” Clemons said.

Chet Sweeney, a senior at Huntington High School, organized “Chet’s Celebrity Bingo” with Troy Brown in an effort to raise money for an all-sports complex in the Fairfield West area. “I saw the mayor’s presentation of the America’s Best Community Pitch and I wanted to be like, ‘You know what? This could be a great thing to take part in.’” Sweeney said. “That could really help the community and I want to be involved in it too.”

Sweeney announced around $30,000 was raised for the facility. Also announced were reunions to Heiner’s Bakery, now Bimbo Bakery, as well as renovations to reduce the company’s environmental footprint. Jeanna Sweeney, sister of Chet and Nina antique store owner and the River to Rail Community and Economic Development committee announced there have been improvements made along Madison Avenue. “When we came together we had this wish list that was so long,” Sexton said. “I thought, ‘wishful thinking I fear,’ but with a little help, I should say a lot of help from the community, we can compete with anybody in the world. We believe, when we come together we will win the $3,000,000 grand prize to ensure that together we will continue to build a prosperous Huntington that will be proudly advanced from generation to generation.”

The press conference ended with a pep talk from radio personality Clint McElroy, always a favorite. “We believe,” Moses said. “We believe that others in Huntington believe that we have the potential to be the best. We believe that others will follow suit. And we believe that we will win the $3,000,000 grand prize to ensure that together we will continue to build a prosperous Huntington that will be proudly advanced from generation to generation.”

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By PATRICK O’LEARY

The Marshall University women’s tennis team has faced tough competition all season and has succeeded. The team with a 10-8 record has defeated the likes of Kentucky, Minnesota, Cincinnati, Virginia Tech and Penn State this season.

The team will then head home and square off with West Virginia State at 7 p.m. “It’s always tough to play at the end of the semester,” senior Anna Pomyatinskaya said. “You want to push yourself as hard as you can. Both teams see play this weekend are not easy, but it’s nice to have a home game finally. It will be senior night so we are excited to see a lot of people come support us.”

Seniors will be recognized at the match Sunday night against West Virginia.

The team faces a new type of challenge: playoff tournament. The team travels to Richmond, Kentucky for a competition against the Colonels of Eastern Kentucky University, with first serves set for 10 a.m.

However, Sunday the team faces a new type of challenge: a day-night doubleheader. Sunday, the team travels to Huntington, Kentucky for a competition against the Colonels of Eastern Kentucky University, with first serves set for 10 a.m.

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The West Virginia Senate made the first steps to curbing addiction in the state by passing legislation Wednesday that would legalize medical marijuana. The bill, Senate Bill 386, or the Creating Opportunities for Patients Act, was signed into law by West Virginia Governor Jim Justice.

The legislation allows patients to medicate with ground-up cannabis smoked in a joint, or inhaled through a vaporizer. Patients can also consume medical marijuana edibles, such as chocolates, pastries, candies, and jelly beans.

The new law would allow patients to grow their own cannabis for medical purposes if they live in a county where a registered medical marijuana facility is operating. Patients with a valid medical marijuana card could possess up to 2.5 ounces of cannabis at any one time.

The bill also establishes the Medical Cannabis Division within the Department of Health and Human Resources to regulate the medical marijuana industry. The state will issue medical cannabis cards to eligible patients, and the Medical Cannabis Division will maintain a registry of cardholders.

The new law is expected to create jobs in the West Virginia medical marijuana industry, which is estimated to generate over $100 million in annual revenue. The law also includes provisions for the safe and secure transport of medical marijuana and its products.

The bill was introduced by Senator Mike Current and sponsored by State Senator John Y任信. It passed the Senate on March 21 with a vote of 29-6, and Governor Justice signed it into law on the same day.

The new law is expected to benefit patients suffering from chronic pain, multiple sclerosis, and other conditions for which medicinal marijuana can provide relief.

The West Virginia Senate's action is the first step in a series of legislative efforts to address the state's addiction crisis. Governor Justice has made addiction a priority, and the new medical marijuana law is part of his multi-pronged approach to addressing the problem.

Medical marijuana laws have been passed in 33 other states, including California, Colorado, and Massachusetts. The law is expected to provide relief to West Virginia's addicted population, which ranks among the highest in the nation.

The new law is likely to face legal challenges from opponents of legalization. However, the state's medical marijuana industry is expected to create jobs and provide a new source of revenue for the state.
By SADIE HELMICK

The Thaenon

The tool's absence could make verification requests this year more likely to be selected as a security measure. In the past, students who didn't use the online tool were more likely to be selected for extra verification, Drager said. Some colleges have already noticed an increase in verification requests this year.

"If nobody is using the IRS data, then it's easier to select students," Drager said. "Federal officials say the tool is in place to condition and mentally prepare for the Conference USA Championships."

The team will travel to Houston, Texas for matches against Texas A&M and Tulane, with the first match set for Saturday, May 13. The Cougars will face the Aggies at 2 p.m. and the Tulane Green Wave at 5 p.m.

"We're excited to get the season underway," Drager said. "We have a lot of young players that will be playing in their first Conference USA Championships, so we're looking forward to seeing how they do.

"We hope to have a good showing at the conference and we're looking forward to the upcoming matches against more experienced opponents."
After school program strives to remain in operation for another year

River Valley Child Development Services’ School Age Connections program is working to raise funds to continue its program for another year and longer if possible.

RYCDS provides early childhood care and education services for children and families. RYCD’s School Age Connections is an after-school program which keeps children engaged, both physically and mentally. It provides activities for each child’s needs and interests.

“The program helps children prosper socially, while still helping them develop their independence skills. “The format of this program has been heavily enrichment-based,” said Valerie Bailey, Director of the School Age Connections program. “This means that we have not just been ‘watching’ the children. We offer some kind of activity for them every day - arts and crafts, STEM activities, group games, cooking, physical activity, creative writing, local history, reading, computer programming, music, and mental health just to name a few.”

Bailey said these activities are provided with help from local organizations and businesses, such as the Huntington Museum of Art, Marshall University, The June Harless Center, YMCA, Ride in Motion, the Guyandotte Public Library and the Guyandotte Historical Society.

“The after school program at Guyandotte Elementary provides its services free of charge to families at Guyandotte Elementary School, although the cost to operate per child is about $1,000. Guyandotte’s RYCD currently has 42 students enrolled.”

“To completely fund a program for an entire school-year, 5 days per week from school dismissal until 6 p.m. for 32 children, at zero cost to families - is approximately $27,000.” Bailey said.

The program is designed for children ages four through 12 enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade. The program also provides all day release for days due to a break or school cancellation. RYCD even offers a summer camp as part of School Age Connections.

“I think the most rewarding aspect of this program is the impact it is making on the lives of these young children,” and Jessica Lundy, School Age Connections Site Supervisor. “They are learning that they do matter in this big ole world, that they each have something to offer, and that their words are powerful tools. Sometimes the one-on-one talks we have with students about why they are talented, full of potential, or worth so much more than words are all they need to keep from giving up on reaching their goals. That means the world to me. Every moment that a child believes otherwise breaks my heart.”

RYCDS has teamed up with Marshall University’s student public relations firm, Be Herd Communications, to raise funds for the upcoming school year. Together they have partnered with local businesses for fundraising events, such as Cabin-Wye Animal Shelter, Backyard Pizza and Raw Bar and Christopher’s Cafe.

Mikaela Keener, Director of Be Herd Communications, said the experiences gained from the public relations capstone class provides the students insight into the public relations field while helping community organizations.

“This is a great opportunity for our class to have real-life experience in the public relations field while giving back to our community.” Keener said. “We are honored to be working with River Valley Child Development Services to help the continuation of the after school program, and to provide the children of Guyandotte a safe and educational after-school environment.”

Funds raised from all events go to RYCD and help plan the large event for the upcoming school year. This large event is a Murder Mystery. More information will be shared.

“Funds raised from all events will go to RYCD’s to continue providing these free services to local families in Guyandotte.”

“I wish people could see the community that is being built around this little program,” Lundy said. “The teachers, offer me tips, advice and help anytime I need it or ask. They are willing to spend a little extra time with a student in after-school for homework help or encouragement. The teachers and staff at Guyandotte are so helpful and encouraging. And they give me!” It’s neat to see how the parents are helping the children to bring extra snacks, books and games. The parents and teachers are very much a part of the program. Going to work at Guyandotte feels like family. The people and students feel like family.”

Katherine M. Hilbert

For the Parthenon

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