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For immediate release

Anne Marie Miles Comes Out in Support of the Legalization of Marijuana for Private Use

South Shore, Chicago, IL — Anne Marie Miles, who is running to represent the 25th District, has publicly expressed her intention to support efforts to legalize marijuana for private use in the State of Illinois.

Mrs. Miles believes that the legalization of cannabis will have a real, positive impact on our community given the overwhelming evidence and research showing its financial, criminal, and economic benefits.

Mrs. Miles, who is campaigning on criminal justice reform, explains the legal advantages of this move. Since SB2228 decriminalized possession of under 10 grams of cannabis in July of last year, the number arrests have dramatically decreased in the City of Chicago, from 3,339 during the first six months of 2016, to 59 for the second half of the year. However, the fines for this civil violation can reach \$200, which can strongly affect the means of lower-income individuals.

Furthermore, the penalty for possession of over 10 grams of marijuana still ranges from a misdemeanor to a felony, with a maximum fine of \$25,000, and up to 30 years in jail. Mrs. Miles also notes that cannabis arrests disproportionately affect the African American community, who constituted 78% of arrests in 2016. Legalizing marijuana could potentially lower crime rates in vulnerable neighborhoods, and improve the living conditions for all of our residents.

Legalization in Illinois could also earn the state between \$350 and \$700 million in tax revenue a year, according to The Marijuana Policy Project, and save the State millions of taxpayer dollars spent on enforcing possession laws. The tax revenue derived from marijuana sales could be directed at social and educational programs that benefit our community members. As an added benefit, law enforcement officials could focus on more urgent matters and offenses.

From an economic perspective, the cannabis industry would create jobs in the State of Illinois. Since the legalization of marijuana in the State of Colorado, over 10,000 new jobs have been created, which has boosted the State's economy and lower its unemployment rate. In Illinois, the 4.9% unemployment rate could decrease due to job creations if this industry is legalized.

Mrs. Miles pledges to vote in favor of bills legalizing cannabis for recreational and private use.

Primary election day is Tuesday, March 20, 2018. You can learn more about Anne Marie Miles and her campaign by visiting www.annemariemiles.com

For more information, contact Tatiana Press at (434) 422-2732