

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Leading Cannabis Companies Launch 'Buy Legal' Campaign to Share Benefits of Buying through Legal Market

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New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and former NBA star Al Harrington join effort alongside Nov. 3 launch at Black CannaBiz Expo in New Orleans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, cannabis industry leaders announced the launch of Buy Legal, a national campaign to educate adult consumers on the benefits of buying through the legal market. Organized by the US Cannabis Council (USCC), the Buy Legal campaign partners with elected officials and cannabis industry companies and organizations to promote safe, legal and regulated marketplaces. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy is the first elected official to partner with Buy Legal, whose 15 founding members include minority-owned businesses, multi-state operators, celebrity brands and cannabis industry leaders who believe in the importance of a healthy, well-regulated cannabis industry.

The campaign kicks off today in New Orleans at the Black CannaBiz Expo to prioritize campaign participation from minority operators of legal cannabis businesses who are disproportionately harmed by the prevailing unregulated market. Lawrence Hudson, Government Affairs Associate of Cronos Group, will moderate a Buy Legal panel on Friday, November 4 featuring speakers Anacostia Organics Owner & CEO Linda Mercado Greene; Josephine & Billies CEO Whitney Beatty and Harvest of Ohio Director of Marketing & Procurement Keya Kellum.

With legal adult-use cannabis available in 19 states in addition to the District of Columbia, and five others on the ballot for 2022, the lack of meaningful and comprehensive national cannabis legislation has created an environment where untested, untaxed and potentially unsafe products are increasingly available to the American consumer. At the same time, the unregulated market is threatening the viability of the legal, regulated cannabis industry and imposing barriers to legacy players, including social equity program applicants, who want to participate in the regulated legal market.

"It is an honor to partner with the US Cannabis Council as the first elected official for the Buy Legal campaign. Since adult-use cannabis became legal in our state in 2021, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission has established a well-regulated adult-use cannabis market that has catalyzed economic growth in our local communities and established minimum standards for safe products," said **New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy**. "But like many other products, cannabis is not immune to the persistent illegal market, which poses a serious risk to consumers. As states like New Jersey continue to refine a regulatory framework for adult use of cannabis, our local businesses and consumers would greatly benefit from the resources that the Buy Legal campaign provides. This campaign will help protect the ability of local, regulated cannabis enterprises to continue to do business in a way that is safe and accountable, and protect the safety of consumers while reinvesting in communities."

Khadijah Tribble, CEO of the United States Cannabis Council (USCC), said, "Cannabis consumers need to understand where they can buy high-quality, safe, and tested cannabis products, and minority cannabis businesses owners deserve the resources that a national campaign like this can provide in order to encourage customers to shop at their businesses."

"As one of the first Black women to own a licensed dispensary in the U.S., I am concerned about the proliferation of unregulated cannabis enterprises that are not required to meet the same testing and safety standards as businesses like mine. A customer can't possibly know what's in an unregulated supply, and if someone is harmed by an unregulated product, that sows distrust in our industry and ultimately hurts licensed, regulated cannabis businesses," said **Linda Mercado Greene, Owner and CEO of Anacostia Organics**. "The Buy Legal campaign will provide customers in our nation's capital and in communities around the country with the peace of mind that the cannabis products they are using are tested and safe. This campaign will help protect consumers and propel the legal cannabis marketplace forward."

"This campaign comes at such an important time in the cannabis industry. To truly create equitable opportunities for generational wealth in our community, things like this must be done. Now more than ever it's imperative to educate consumers on the importance of buying regulated, safe products," said **Al Harrington, CEO of Viola and 16-Year NBA Veteran**.

The founding members of USCC's Buy Legal campaign include Anacostia Organics, American Trade Association of Cannabis and Hemp, Canopy Growth, Columbia Care, Cresco Labs, Cronos Group, Curaleaf, DC Cannabis Trade Association, Holistic Industries, Jushi, Native Roots, PAX, TrueGreen, Viola and Wana Brands. The founding members hope to recruit a broad range of legal cannabis businesses to implement the Buy Legal seal across e-commerce, in-store as well as at industry conferences and events. Participation in the campaign is not limited to USCC membership.

For more information on Buy Legal and how to get involved, please visit www.buylegal.org.
 (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/3n5ogi/fd1rbrm/76uot0_!iJ30X0ZmC1oQtBA!iY3Uv_NjWv09nrm8R9_13fQxB3tJuzGhXqUOVRWoEkyRWd8rYq3mnLkYCD17i6mJH)

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