



Urban League  
of Portland



Community Law  
METROPOLITAN PUBLIC DEFENDER



OCDLA  
OREGON CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

## **We Urge a Yes Vote on SB 420 and SB 975 Marijuana Conviction Expedited Expungement & Conviction Reduction**

**Forcing people to bear the collateral consequences of a criminal conviction for an marijuana offense that's no longer considered a crime simply prolongs the injustices of the failed, discriminatory drug war.** For marijuana legalization to truly advance racial and social justice, criminal records for behavior that is now legal must be swiftly cleared. Unfortunately, this has yet to happen in the State of Oregon.

**The process of expungement is expensive and complex, and we know that people who are eligible often don't apply because of the barriers involved.** Expungement currently requires navigating complex legal bureaucracies; paying court fees and background check fees that amount to hundreds of dollars; and often having to hire legal counsel, which further increases costs.

**SB 420** establishes an expedited expungement process to erase marijuana records, including creating a simpler process, a waiver of court filing fees, and the elimination of the need for a criminal background check.

**SB 975** is a companion to Senate Bill 420. It addresses old marijuana convictions that would still be an offense to today, but have been lowered by Measure 91 and other legislation that we have passed since 2009. Senate Bill 975 creates an expedited path for reducing the level of a prior marijuana conviction to the level that the offense would be today. Many old felony convictions could therefore be reduced to misdemeanors or violations.

**To begin repairing the disproportionate harms of prohibition, we must remove barriers to clearing and reducing the records of the people who have been most affected it.** SB 420 and SB 975 are positive steps in that direction.

**For these reasons, we urge you to support SB 420 and SB 975.**