

RESOLUTION DECRIMINALIZING ENTHEOGENS IN THE CITY OF SEATTLE

OVERVIEW:

This resolution declares that the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of anyone engaging in entheogen related practices *shall be among the City of Seattle's lowest law enforcement priorities.*

DEFINITION:

"Entheogen" is defined as any living, fresh, dried, or processed plant or fungal material, including teas or powders, that may contain currently scheduled or analog psychoactive indole amines or phenethylamines, including, but not limited to, psilocybin mushrooms, ayahuasca tea, and iboga. Importantly, *Lophophora williamsii* (also known as peyote) has a particular history in the United States, a vulnerable ecological status, and a special cultural significance to Native Americans. Due to this special history and overharvesting and collapse of peyote gardens in southern Texas, and to the long time required for plants to mature in cultivation, peyote is not included in the definition of entheogens adopted by this resolution (whereas mescaline containing cacti are included).

Moreover, nothing in the resolution shall be construed to interfere with the current rights of Native Americans to possess, consume and cultivate peyote under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and amendments. Similarly, because *Incilius alvarius* (the Sonoran Desert Toad) is threatened with extinction, 5-MeO-DMT extract derived by milking the glands of these toads, is excluded from this definition of entheogens. 5-MeO-DMT derived from sources other than *Incilius alvarius* is included in the definition. Finally, *Tabernanthe iboga* (iboga), and natural extracts thereof, can be produced sustainably in greenhouses and various plantations around the world, and thus are included in the definition; however, most is produced by the overharvesting of wild iboga in Gabon by poachers. Consequently, ibogaine semi-synthetically derived from *Voacanga africanus* is the preferred source.

"Entheogen related activities" means the cultivation, possession, transport, storage, sharing, exchange, or consumption of entheogens.

WHEREAS:

Punitive drug policies disproportionately impact people of color and low-income communities; and state and federal scheduling of Entheogens, and other substances associated with those communities, has served as a pretext for disrupting and criminalizing those communities, which has destroyed countless lives and torn families apart, this resolution is an effort to begin correcting the irreparable harm caused by the U.S. war on drugs; and

WHEREAS: Depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, trauma, end-of-life anxiety, grief, and other conditions are plaguing our communities, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and the use of Entheogens has been shown to benefit the well-being of individuals and communities in addressing

these afflictions via scientific and clinical studies, and within continuing traditional and communal practices; and

WHEREAS: Several Entheogens have completed clinical trials sanctioned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), including Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials demonstrating the safety and efficacy of psilocybin therapy, which the FDA has designated a breakthrough therapy for major depression and treatment-resistant depression; and

WHEREAS: Entheogens have been recognized as sacred to human cultures around the world for thousands of years, and continue to be revered and utilized safely to this day by venerable and sincere cultural and spiritual leaders and communities throughout the world, the United States, and the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS: Entheogens have been shown to lead to experiences that are reported as mystical and that can demonstrably catalyze profound personal and spiritual growth; and a recent Johns Hopkins University medical study found that psilocybin occasioned mystical-type experiences considered to be among the five most meaningful experiences in the subject's life for over 75% of participants, with continuing positive lifestyle changes reported after a 14-month follow-up; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations considers Entheogens as suitable for exclusion from Schedule 1 control, at least when used for religious purposes, and the Entheogen related practices of certain groups are already explicitly protected in the U.S. under the doctrine of religious freedom; and

WHEREAS: Seven U.S. cities (Denver, CO; Oakland and Santa Cruz, CA; Ann Arbor, MI; Somerville, Cambridge, and Northampton, MA; and Washington, DC) have decriminalized entheogens, acknowledging their spiritual and therapeutic benefits, Oregon has effectively decriminalized possession and use of all drugs including psychedelics and passed legislation to legalize psilocybin therapy, and legislators in ten states (Washington, California, Florida, Texas, Iowa, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, and Hawaii) have sponsored bills to decriminalize or legalize entheogens; and

WHEREAS: Research conducted by national governments, including those of the Netherlands and Portugal, concluded that the availability of Entheogens poses little or no risk to individuals or public health, and in some cases reduces the consumption of more harmful substances; *therefore*,

MAY IT BE RESOLVED:

Entheogen related activities shall be the lowest law enforcement priority for the City of Seattle, and no department, agency, board, commission, officer, or employee of the city, including without limitation, Seattle Police Department personnel, shall expend any city funds, manpower, or other resources to investigate, arrest, or prosecute persons or groups for engaging in entheogen related activities.