Illinois has become the first state in the nation to legalize the sale and use of recreational marijuana through an act of the legislature. Sent to the governor for signing in early June, HB 1438 was being hailed by its legislative sponsors as marking a new era in Illinois public policy and as a “model for other states in its commitment to equity and criminal justice reform.”

According to the Chicago Tribune, beginning next year, Illinois residents 21 and older will be able to legally possess up to 30 grams of cannabis, 5 grams of cannabis concentrate, or 500 milligrams of THC contained in a cannabis-infused product.

HB 1438 sets aside a portion of new revenue from legalization for substance-abuse programs and mental health services, as well as initiatives that seek to reduce gun violence and expand employment opportunities. Included in the bill, too, is language to promote minority involvement in the cannabis industry and expunge certain cannabis offenses.

Eleven U.S. states have legalized recreational marijuana, including Michigan. In that state, voters approved a statewide ballot initiative in fall 2018. (Approval by voters, rather than legislatures, has been the path to legalization in most states.) In recent years, ballot initiatives have failed in North Dakota and Ohio.