



NEWS.....

FROM CHRIS HIGGINS

ALBANY COUNTY LEGISLATOR

5TH DISTRICT

**HUDSON/PARK, WASHINGTON PARK, PARK SOUTH,
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COUNTY LEGISLATOR CHRIS HIGGINS INTRODUCES LEGISLATION BANNING THE SALE OF SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA IN ALBANY COUNTY

On the heels of U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer's press conference yesterday in Albany, county legislator Chris Higgins (D- Center Square) has introduced a local law that would prohibit the sale of synthetic marijuana.

Synthetic marijuana or "cannabinoids" as they are technically referred to are herb like products laced with chemicals that produce effects similar to those people experience when high or stoned on marijuana. They are commonly sold in smoke shops and bodegas throughout the county under names such as K2, Spice, and Haze.

The local law would prohibit businesses within Albany County from selling these drugs over-the-counter and subject violators to penalties upwards of \$1,500 for repeat offenders.

County legislator Higgins stated, "These substances are being openly sold and marketed around my district in the Lark Street area. They are scientifically untested, dangerous, and in recent years have led to increased abuse."

The introduction also follows a raid and seizure of synthetic marijuana by federal agents on four smoke shops located on the Tonawanda Indian reservation in western New York yesterday. Higgins continued, "Clearly the federal government is concerned about the adverse effects of these substances and abuse by teens as exhibited by this raid. We in Albany County must take immediate and proactive steps to outlaw the sale of these items."

Higgins continued, "If the federal or state government won't outlaw these substances then we in the county legislature must and will."

The local law will be formally introduced at the County Legislature's March meeting and referred to the law and health committees.

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