



TO Interested Parties
FROM Dave Metz, Miranda Everitt, & Denny Han
RE: Voter Support for Drug Decriminalization Across D.C. Wards
DATE April 14, 2022

In 2021, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) completed a survey of 402 Washington, D.C. voters to assess views of a policy that would decriminalize possession of small amounts of certain controlled substances and increase funding for providing treatment. The results show that D.C. voters are overwhelmingly in favor of the policy on the whole in addition to each of its major components. Most specific findings are detailed below.

- At least three in four in every Ward support the policy. As shown in Figure 1 below, four in five D.C. voters support the proposed policy. At minimum, three in four support the policy in Wards 3 and 6, while upwards to 96% support the policy Ward 8.

Figure 1: Support for the Proposed Policy

This policy would remove criminal penalties for possession of small amounts of commonly-used controlled substances consistent with personal use. It would also increase funding for substance use treatment, healthcare, housing, and other services for individuals struggling with addiction, underlying health conditions, or poverty. Would your support or oppose the City Council enacting this policy?

Table with 10 columns: All Voters, Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 3, Ward 4, Ward 5, Ward 6, Ward 7, Ward 8. Rows include Total Support, Total Oppose, and Don't know percentages for each ward.

- Similarly, at least three in four in every Ward support the decriminalization aspect of the policy. At minimum, 76% of Ward 3 voters support eliminating criminal penalties for small amounts of controlled substances, while the highest support is in Wards 1 and 8 at 89% (Figure 2 on the next page).

Figure 2: Support for Decriminalization

Now I am going to read you a list of elements of this policy. Please tell me whether your support or oppose each one: Eliminating criminal penalties for small amounts of drugs for personal use

	All Voters	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8
Total Support	83%	89%	84%	76%	82%	87%	78%	81%	89%
Total Oppose	13%	11%	12%	16%	15%	9%	21%	8%	11%
Don't Know	4%	0%	4%	7%	2%	4%	1%	11%	0%

- **At least four in five in every Ward support establishing harm reduction centers.** As shown in Figure 3 below, at minimum, 86% of Ward 8 voters support establishing harm reduction centers, while over nine in ten in all other Wards support it. The highest support is in Ward 5 at 97%.

Figure 3: Support for Harm Reduction Centers

Now I am going to read you a list of elements of this policy. Please tell me whether your support or oppose each one: Establishing 24/7 centers to provide harm reduction, health, and overdose prevention services to people who use drugs

	All Voters	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8
Total Support	93%	91%	95%	93%	93%	97%	92%	96%	86%
Total Oppose	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	2%	8%	4%	14%
Don't know	1%	2%	0%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%

- **At least nine in ten in every ward support additional funding for outreach services.** At minimum, 89% of Ward 8 voters support this funding, while upwards to 97% in Ward 5 support it, as shown in Figure 4 on the next page.

Figure 4: Support for Funding Outreach Services

Now I am going to read you a list of elements of this policy. Please tell me whether you support or oppose each one: Providing additional funding to connect individuals suffering from addiction, health problems, and needs relating to poverty to services like healthcare and substance use disorder treatment

	All Voters	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8
Total Support	95%	95%	94%	94%	96%	97%	94%	96%	89%
Total Oppose	5%	5%	6%	4%	3%	0%	6%	4%	10%
Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%

In summary, Washington, D.C. voters across all wards are strongly and broadly in favor of decriminalizing possession of personal-use amounts of controlled substances and investing in harm reduction centers and outreach services for addiction and related health disorders.

ⁱ **Methodology:** From June 30 - July 8, 2021, FM3 completed 402 online and telephone (landline and wireless) interviews with Washington, D.C. voters. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.