

March 4, 2021

The Honorable Steven Bradford, Chair  
Senate Committee on Public Safety  
State Capitol, Room 2031  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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## Re: SB 519 (Wiener) Controlled Substances: Decriminalization of Certain Hallucinogenic Substances. (SUPPORT)

Dear Chairman Bradford:

My name is Evodio Walle, and I am writing in the capacity of President/CEO of the San Francisco Bay Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in support of SB 519 (Wiener). The Hispanic Chamber advocates for the socio-economic prosperity of the 9-county, 101-city region known as the San Francisco Bay Area, now home to 7 million Californians. In alignment with our organization's mission and values to serve the community, we believe SB 519 advances cognitive liberty and implements a comprehensive, statewide scheme authorizing and regulating the cultivation, processing and distribution of entheogens and the chemical compounds contained therein for personal, spiritual, religious, dietary, therapeutic, and medical use, and we believe the matter to be of state-wide socio-economic concern.

### Declarations:

- a) No one should be in prison for using entheogenic healing plants.
- b) No families should be separated solely for using entheogens.
- c) Entheogens have been safely used for thousands of years for healing, spiritual and religious purposes.
- d) Denver and Oakland have decriminalized entheogens, with Oakland unanimously passing the Oakland Community Healing Initiative to protect community ceremony and establish a task force to explore community-serving micro-economic opportunities.
- e) Entheogens are much safer than caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. E.g. A 2010 analysis of the harms associated with the war on drugs found psilocybin mushrooms to be the safest of all twenty drugs studied.
- f) The FDA designated Psilocybin (the main component of "Magic Mushrooms") as a Breakthrough Therapy for treatment-resistant depression and major depressive disorder.
- g) Research conducted by the Beckley Foundation has found Psilocybin Mushrooms to be a safe and effective treatment for severe and treatment-resistant depression, anxiety in terminally ill patients, and nicotine addiction.

### With SB 519 we aim to support the People of California to:

- a) Prevent the distribution of entheogens to minors, except in appropriate cases when they have been recommended by a physician or psychologist;
- b) Prevent the profits from the sale of entheogens from going to criminal enterprises, gangs, and cartels;
- c) Prevent driving while impaired by entheogens and other adverse public health consequences associated with entheogens;
- d) Enact legislation allowing non-violent prisoners who were convicted of buying, selling, growing, manufacturing or possessing entheogens to have their sentences reviewed and criminal records expunged;
- e) Ensure that local jurisdictions may not define as a nuisance, per se, any action or conduct authorized by this Act; rather, a showing of an actual nuisance shall be required;
- f) Support the therapeutic and medical research of entheogens

Sincerely,



Evodio Walle  
President/CEO  
San Francisco Bay Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce