

In The News

Akerman Partner Jonathan Robbins and Ashlee Tising Anticipate Third Time's the Charm for Florida Cannabis Legalization

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Florida voter efforts to expand the state's medical marijuana program to recreational or adult use have another chance, this time backed by country music duo the Bellamy Brothers, along with Trulieve, Florida's largest operator, two Akerman attorneys report. The effort has failed twice.

Cannabis Practice Chair [Jonathan Robbins](#) in Fort Lauderdale and public policy consultant Ashlee Tising in Tallahassee explain in their *Law360* article, "Third Time May Be the Charm for Florida Cannabis Legalization," that advocates filed a constitutional ballot initiative last month for Florida's 2024 general election titled, "Adult Personal Use of Marijuana." Backers will have to gather 900,000 signatures from Florida voters to move it forward. Thereafter, if the specific language of the ballot initiative passes in the Florida Supreme Court, Florida's existing cannabis program will expand, and more players will likely enter the Florida market.

The authors wrote, "By mid-2025, the effective date of the amendment, if passed, Florida's medical marijuana program will likely be a multibillion-dollar industry consisting of more than 1 million registered patients. Legalization in Florida through the adult-use ballot initiative will create one of the largest state-legal marijuana markets — measured by sales — in the country.

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With over 20 million residents and more than 100 million annual visitors, the number of potential consumers in Florida will expand exponentially.

Additionally, if passed, Florida will likely be the first state to legalize adult-use marijuana in the Southeast, thus, in the absence of a tightly controlled border to prohibit the illegal transportation of cannabis across state lines, we can expect significant sales to occur in northern Florida where the state borders Georgia and Alabama.”

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