

Lansing mayor, state rep to speak at Annual Hash Bash

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ANN ARBOR — The 46th-annual marijuana celebration known as the Hash Bash takes place Saturday in Ann Arbor.

As usual, some politicians are on the list of speakers for the rally starting at noon on the University of Michigan's Central Campus Diag.

That includes state Sen. Coleman Young II, D-Detroit; Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, a Democrat and former state rep and senator; Ann Arbor City Council Member Jason Frenzel, D-1st Ward; and state Rep. Yousef Rabhi, D-Ann Arbor.

Altogether, about 30 people are expected to speak during the two-hour rally, including former Detroit Red Wings hockey player Darren McCarty, who is speaking for the second year in a row, and Eugene Monroe, who played football for the Jacksonville Jaguars and the Baltimore Ravens.

An annual tradition dating back to 1972, the Hash Bash brings thousands of pot enthusiasts to Ann Arbor every year, and many are likely to light up a joint or two during the rally on the Diag before spilling over to Monroe Street, where the party continues with the Monroe Street Fair, featuring live music and street vendors. That's followed later in the evening by the annual Hash Bash after party at the Blind Pig. Festivalgoers also roam the campus and downtown, visiting shops where they can buy bongs and medical marijuana.

U-M warns that Hash Bash is not an amnesty day where campus police look the other way on pot smoking on campus. While the university allows the rally to happen as a matter of free speech, campus police follow state law and will arrest people caught with drugs, including marijuana, on university property.

Elsewhere in Ann Arbor, marijuana has been decriminalized since the 1970s, with the city penalty for possession being a \$25 ticket for a first offense.

Efforts to put the question of legalizing marijuana in Michigan on the ballot in 2018 are expected to be discussed during Saturday's rally.

Other speakers for this year's Hash Bash include: › Danny Danko, senior cultivation editor at High Times magazine.

› Matt Abel, a Michigan criminal defense attorney and

executive director of the Michigan chapter of NORML, the

National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. › Larry Gabriel, a contributor for Detroit Metro Times. › Lissa Satori, a grassroots organizer who is coordinating the Michigan Coalition to Regulate Marijuana like

Alcohol. › Marvin Surowitz, a professor of political science at

Wayne County Community College. › Zahra Abbas, a psychology student at UM-Dearborn. › Jorge Cervantes, an author and expert in cannabis

cultivation.

› Jim Powers, co-founder of Michigan Parents for

Compassion, and his young son Ryan, a pediatric cannabis patient. › Alexi Sinanaj, a chemical engineering student at UM and president of the university's chapter of Students for Sensible Drug Policy.

› DJ Short, a cannabis cultivator and breeder referred to as the "Willy Wonka of Marijuana."

› Captain Kirk, a certified teacher for Oaksterdam University, a cannabis college, known for his edible products and founder of Dab-O-Ween.

› Nick Zettell, Hash Bash organizer and field manager on the MI Legalize Board of Directors.

- › Sue Sisley, an Arizona-based doctor whose work has focused on medical marijuana.
- › Mark Passerini, Hash Bash emcee and organizer and co-founder of the Om of Medicine marijuana dispensary in Ann Arbor.
- › Adam Brook, former Hash Bash emcee and organizer. › Jeff Hank, civil rights attorney from Lansing and executive director of the Michigan Comprehensive Cannabis Law Reform Initiative.
- › Chuck Ream, a retired kindergarten teacher and co-founder of the Safer Michigan Coalition.
- › John Sinclair, a poet and activist who had his 10-year prison sentence for marijuana possession overturned in 1971 after the Michigan Supreme Court ruled the state's marijuana statutes were unconstitutional, leading to the organizing of the first Hash Bash on April 1, 1972, the weekend before the state's new marijuana statute took effect.
- › Cassandra Ricks DiGilio, board member for Macomb County NORML and founding chairwoman of the Metro Detroit chapter of Women Grow.
- › Brad Forrester, founder of the Cheboygan County affiliate of Michigan NORML.
- › Chuck Voeltzel, one of the top three petitioners for the 2016 MI Legalize effort.
- › Cathleen Graham, hospice manager and co-founder of the Cannabis Standards Institute.

- **Caption:** People mingle on the University of Michigan Diag in Ann Arbor during the 2013 Hash Bash. MLive.com files

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