

Puerto Rico enacts medicinal marijuana law

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The depleted government coffers of bankrupt Puerto Rico will take in \$50 million a month now that a law allowing the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes has taken effect, the governor said.

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After the bill survived a [bumpy ride](#) through the National Assembly in this US territory, Governor Ricardo Rossello Nevares signed it on Sunday.

It establishes a [legal framework](#) for medicinal [marijuana](#) and paves the way for people with cancer and other diseases to avoid prosecution for possessing pot or products derived from it.

The previous [governor](#) legalized it by decree because the legislature rejected a law that would also have legalized use of marijuana for recreational purposes.

Rossello Nevares said the new law will be an economic boost of sorts. The island is buckling under \$74 billion in debt.

The fines cover a range of offenses, from businesses who sell pot to those without a medical permission card or don't keep it properly stored under lock and key, to those responsible for crops that are not properly guarded.

Ten percent of tax revenues from the sale of medicinal marijuana will go to a major hospital going through financial woes, he said.

And 50 percent of all money raised through fines will go to the state-run University of Puerto Rico, which also has big money problems.

Medicine is not taxed in Puerto Rico but medical marijuana will be.

The governor also expressed hope that a medical marijuana industry will create 50,000 jobs in this island of 3.2 million people with an unemployment rate of 12.3 percent.

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