



**Councillor Paul W. Ainslie**  
City of Toronto Councillor  
Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

Chair, General Government Committee  
Chair, Scarborough Community Council  
Chair, Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo  
Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority  
Chair, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries  
Night Economy Champion, City of Toronto

Email: [councillor\\_ainslie@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_ainslie@toronto.ca)

Website: [www.paulainslie.com](http://www.paulainslie.com)

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@Ainslie\_ward24

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## MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate release

### **Reviewing Cannabis Control Act, 2017 Amid Enforcement Challenges**

Toronto, ON – Today, Toronto City Council supported the motion from Councillor Ainslie [requesting the Province of Ontario undertake a review of the Cannabis Control Act, 2017](#), which has not undergone a comprehensive review since it was introduced seven years ago. [Cannabis Control Act](#).

The presence of illegal cannabis dispensaries poses significant enforcement challenges, including organized crime involvement, physical threats, and the potential for gun violence. However, addressing these issues extends beyond the scope and authority of municipal bylaw enforcement officers.

"The landscape of cannabis regulation is rapidly evolving, and it's imperative that our legislative framework keeps pace," remarked Councillor Ainslie. "Revisiting the Cannabis Control Act is not just about enforcement; it's about adapting our approach to ensure the safety and health of our residents." Advised Councillor Ainslie.

The City is not aware of another Ontario municipality that enforces the Cannabis Control Act using municipal bylaw enforcement officers. There are 215 legal cannabis operations active in Toronto and the City is aware of 53 unlicensed cannabis dispensaries operating. This means that of all the known cannabis dispensaries in the city, one in five are unlicensed.

Addressing the presence of unlicensed cannabis dispensaries presents several enforcement challenges for the City including the potential of physical threats to City staff when preventing these locations from reopening. The Cannabis Control Act provides limited authority to municipal bylaw enforcement officers. These officers do not have arrest powers and are not permitted or trained to use force while carrying out enforcement activities. This makes the enforcement of unlicensed cannabis dispensaries challenging and presents health and safety risks to officers.

Councillor Ainslie's call for revisiting the Cannabis Control Act reflects a proactive step in addressing emerging challenges and ensuring robust regulation of cannabis-related activities.

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#### **For More Information:**

Paul W. Ainslie, Toronto City Councillor  
Ward 24, Scarborough-Guildwood

416-392-4008 - [councillor\\_ainslie@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_ainslie@toronto.ca)

Constituency Office  
Scarborough Civic Centre  
150 Borough Drive  
Scarborough, ON M1P 4N7  
Tel: 416-396-7222

Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West, Suite C52  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
Tel: 416-392-4008  
Fax: 416-392-4006