

Nev. tax officials seek funds to create recreational pot rules

By Associated Press

Nevada tax officials are seeking a nearly \$900,000 loan to hire four officers to create regulations for the newly passed recreational marijuana law.

A state Department of Taxation request to tap funds from an Interim Finance Contingency Account will be considered Tuesday by the three-member state Board of Examiners, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reported.

Officials say the money would fund four tax officers through the June 30 end of the fiscal year, and would be repaid with proceeds from a 15 percent excise tax the law imposes on wholesale recreational marijuana sales.

If the request is approved by the panel – made up of Gov. Brian Sandoval, Attorney General Adam Laxalt and Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske – it will go to the legislative finance committee on Jan. 26.

Question 2 legalized recreational marijuana in amounts up to 1 ounce by adults 21 or older.

The law took effect Jan. 1, but officials say it could be a year before the drug is available for purchase through licensed dispensaries. Revenue from the excise tax is earmarked for the tax agency and local municipalities for administration and regulation, plus the state general education fund. State and local sales taxes also apply.

The tax department is working with the governor's office on an executive order to develop a task force to provide guidance on

issues related to legalization.

A public workshop is expected soon to look at temporary regulations to let the department begin issuing licenses while permanent regulations are drawn up for review by the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

Nevada provided a similar budget boost to start regulating medical marijuana dispensaries in 2014. Lawmakers allocated \$623,000 to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, and the program brought in \$761,000 in tax revenue in the first fiscal year.