

**Ohio 136TH General Assembly
Senate General Government Committee
SB86 Interested Party
Prohibit Sale of Intoxicating Hemp Products
March 25, 2025**

Madam Chair Roegner, Madam Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Senator Blakshear and members of the Senate General Government Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to present an Interested Party testimony before you today regarding SB86 with its purpose to regulate intoxicating hemp products in Ohio

This bill presents similar language that SB326, 135th GA, presented in November 2024 which was overwhelmingly defeated by opponents in their testimonial hearings. SB86 continues to state safety concerns for both children and public safety issues as well. Again I will advise our true safety issues rest with alcohol 178,000 deaths in 2024, firearms 47000 deaths 2024, opioid overdoses 87,000 and tobacco products kill millions each year. These categories further present daily public disruptions to our first responders, emergency hospital medical services, increases in medical insurance premiums and traumatic societal harm to many. Cannabis deaths share zero deaths and bring only stigma harm to society as a whole. As a public safety and security subject matter specialist of thirty plus years I will say your child and public safety concerns are misinformed fear mongering fallacy beliefs.

During the creation of Ohio's hemp program, 133rd GA SB57, the state was negligent in promulgating rules/guidelines addressing the established hemp retail stores in Ohio. Safety and security measures around packaging, age requirements, forms of products and more state regulated language was requested to be part of the bill but was left out. This left an open window for the marketing of unregulated hemp products. This alarmed the cannabis licensees rightfully so being they are over regulated with safety and security concerns and marketing rules. Several attempts to address these concerns were legislatively overlooked.

Attached to my testimony you will find the language of two Acts I proposed to several legislators in January of this year. The Hemp Act proposing the regulation of hemp retail sales and The Melatonin Act proposing the regulation of melatonin retail sales. As for a safety concern on adulterated cannabinoids, I'll make the point melatonin has been found to be the cause of death in several children across the country. To this date I have heard of no declaration for an emergency on this unregulated product. Melatonin has become the new narcotic used among

teenagers on the illicit market, being inexpensive, found in abundance in retail stores and no rules to purchasing or warning labels.

While SB86 presents some concerns and solutions to the Ohio hemp retail market for the safety of children and public safety further presents some disturbing language on the regulation of various cannabinoids found in both the hemp and cannabis plants. I too have safety concerns regarding any adulterated hemp or cannabis product in Ohio's programs. With respect I would caution on the banning of any natural cannabinoid found in both the cannabis and hemp plants and suggest the focus remain on adulterated products, non tested products, imported sources and unknown product additives.

I don't believe and hope that the intention of SB86 is not to terminate or harm the hemp industry in an attempt to appease the cannabis industry. The economic impact of hemp retailers has been one of positive revenue, tax dollars to the state, an alternative healthcare choice and thousands of jobs in Ohio's hemp retail businesses.

SB86 addresses the creation of criminal statutes under Chapter 3779 RC. These statutes are absurd and ridiculous over a non intoxicating plant. Will this be the beginning of a "New Era of Cannabis Prohibition" through unwarranted language statutes to criminalize a plant and those who freely choose to use or consume hemp products. Penalties for intoxicating alcohol and tobacco products are much less severe as these two products cause a host of illegal behaviors with many resulting in serious physical harm and death. Where is the true care for public health and safety concerns?

There is a simple solution to the concern of adulterated products in both the hemp and cannabis programs. The cannabis program has in place such rules; no adulterated products, safe packaging, age appropriate consumption, full profiles and warnings on packaging labels, testing, approved locations licensed by the state and a state inspection label on the business front door. Employing these same rules to hemp retailers, seems conceivable, affordable and practical.

Last week you entertained proponent testimonies and in conclusion you heard from a Doctor representing the CDC who stated children around Ohio are being admitted to ER's around the state from Delta8 products and ending up in coma's. This Doctor presents no substantiated data to these claims and further this same doctor testified last year in committee stating children around Ohio are dying

from cannabis gummies purchased in medical dispensaries. This too was found to be a lie as she was challenged by a committee member on the data.

You further had a religious lobbyist who testified cannabis has become the drug of addiction for teenagers across the country resulting in harmful drug overdoses and an increase in teenager suicides. No data is available to substantiate these claims either.

In Safety,

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**CANNABIS
SAFETY FIRST**

 **Hemp ACT 2025**

 **melatonin act 2025**

<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/south-texas-el-paso/news/2023/10/12/texas-teacher-melatonin-gummies-students>

<https://www.npr.org/2022/06/03/1102933012/melatonin-poisoning-kids-sleep-aid-overdose>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9842516/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/melatonin-side-effects/fdq-20057874>

