



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 835

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7181

House of Representatives, May 6, 2025

The Committee on Judiciary reported through REP. STAFSTROM of the 129th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ENFORCEMENT OF THE STATE'S CANNABIS, HEMP AND TOBACCO LAWS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivision (1) of section 21a-420 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3 *2025*):

4 (1) "Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis
5 Act" or "RERACA" means this section, sections 2-56j, 7-294kk, 7-294ll,
6 12-330ll to 12-330nn, inclusive, 14-227p, 21a-278b, 21a-278c, 21a-279c,
7 21a-279d, 21a-420a to 21a-420j, inclusive, 21a-420l to 21a-421r, inclusive,
8 21a-421aa to 21a-421ff, inclusive, 21a-421aaa to 21a-421hhh, inclusive, as
9 amended by this act, 21a-422 to 21a-422c, inclusive, 21a-422e to 21a-
10 422g, inclusive, 21a-422j to 21a-422s, inclusive, 22-61n, 23-4b, 47a-9a, 53-
11 247a, 53a-213a, 53a-213b, 54-33p, 54-56q, 54-56r, 54-125k and 54-142u,
12 sections 23, 60, 63 to 65, inclusive, 124, 144 and 165 of public act 21-1 of
13 the June special session, and the amendments in public act 21-1 of the
14 June special session to sections 7-148, 10-221, 12-30a, 12-35b, 12-412, 12-

15 650, 12-704d, 14-44k, 14-111e, 14-227a to 14-227c, inclusive, 14-227j, 15-
16 140q, 15-140r, 18-100h, 19a-342, 19a-342a, 21a-267, 21a-277, 21a-279, 21a-
17 279a, 21a-408 to 21a-408f, inclusive, 21a-408h to 21a-408p, inclusive, 21a-
18 408r to 21a-408w, inclusive, 21a-420aa, 21a-421s, 30-89a, 31-40q, 32-39,
19 46b-120, 51-164n, 53-394, 53a-39c, 54-1m, 54-33g, 54-41b, 54-56e, 54-56g,
20 54-56i, 54-56k, 54-56n, 54-63d, 54-66a and 54-142e, section 20 of public
21 act 23-79 and sections 2 to 5, inclusive, of this act;

22 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) There shall be within the
23 Department of Consumer Protection a state-wide cannabis and hemp
24 enforcement task force for the effective and cooperative enforcement of
25 the laws of this state concerning the cultivation, manufacturing,
26 distribution, transportation, display, purchase, sale, dispensing,
27 possession and use of (1) cannabis and cannabis products, as such terms
28 are defined in section 21a-420 of the general statutes, as amended by this
29 act, (2) infused beverages, as defined in section 21a-425 of the general
30 statutes, (3) hemp and hemp products, as such terms are defined in
31 section 22-61l of the general statutes, and (4) moderate-THC hemp
32 products, as defined in section 21a-426 of the general statutes.

33 (b) The state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force shall
34 be authorized to conduct any investigation authorized by this section at
35 any place within the state as may be deemed necessary.

36 (c) The state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force may
37 request and receive from any federal, state or local agency cooperation
38 and assistance in the performance of its duties, including, but not
39 limited to, the temporary assignment of such personnel as may be
40 necessary for the task force to perform its functions.

41 (d) The state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force may
42 enter into mutual assistance and cooperation agreements with other
43 states pertaining to cannabis, cannabis product, infused beverage,
44 hemp, hemp product and moderate-THC hemp product law
45 enforcement matters extending across state boundaries, and may
46 consult and exchange information and personnel with agencies of other
47 states with reference to cannabis, cannabis product, infused beverage,

48 hemp, hemp product and moderate-THC hemp product law
49 enforcement problems of mutual concern.

50 (e) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection may, within available
51 appropriations, appoint a director and such other personnel as the
52 commissioner deems necessary for the duties of the state-wide cannabis
53 and hemp enforcement task force.

54 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) Upon request by the state-
55 wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force established under
56 section 2 of this act, the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public
57 Protection may from time to time select such number of police personnel
58 of any municipality of the state to act temporarily as special state police
59 officers to carry out the duties of the task force as the Commissioner of
60 Emergency Services and Public Protection, in consultation with the task
61 force, deems necessary. Such municipal police personnel shall be
62 appointed from a list of municipal police personnel recommended to the
63 State-Wide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Task Force Policy Board,
64 established under section 5 of this act, by the chiefs of police of the
65 municipalities and approved by the board.

66 (b) Each municipality shall be responsible for fully compensating the
67 municipal police personnel temporarily assigned to the state-wide
68 cannabis and hemp enforcement task force, and such compensation
69 shall be payable to such assigned municipal police personnel while on
70 duty with the task force.

71 (c) For purposes of indemnification of such municipal police
72 personnel and municipalities against any losses, damages or liabilities
73 arising out of the service and activities of the state-wide cannabis and
74 hemp enforcement task force, municipal police personnel while
75 assigned to, and performing the duties of, the task force shall be deemed
76 to be acting as employees of the state.

77 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) Any municipal police officer,
78 while assigned to duty with the state-wide cannabis and hemp
79 enforcement task force established under section 2 of this act and

80 working at the direction of the Commissioner of Emergency Services
81 and Public Protection or the director of the task force, if any, shall, when
82 acting within the scope of his or her authority, have the same powers,
83 duties, privileges and immunities as are conferred upon him or her as a
84 state police officer.

85 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) There shall be a State-Wide
86 Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Task Force Policy Board, within the
87 Department of Consumer Protection for administrative purposes only,
88 consisting of the Commissioner of Consumer Protection, the
89 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, the
90 Commissioner of Revenue Services, the Attorney General and the Chief
91 State's Attorney.

92 (b) The policy board shall direct and supervise the formulation of
93 policies and operating procedures, and coordinate the activities, of the
94 state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force established under
95 section 2 of this act with law enforcement agencies within and without
96 the state.

97 (c) The policy board may apply for, and shall administer, any federal,
98 state, local or private appropriations or grant funds made available for
99 the operation of the task force.

100 Sec. 6. Subdivision (6) of section 54-41a of the general statutes is
101 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
102 *2025*):

103 (6) "Investigative officer" means (A) any officer of the Connecticut
104 state police, (B) the chief inspector or any inspector in the Division of
105 Criminal Justice who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of
106 or to make arrests for offenses enumerated in this chapter, (C) any
107 municipal police officer who (i) has been duly sworn as a special state
108 police officer under the provisions of section 29-177 [and who] or section
109 3 of this act, (ii) is currently assigned to the state-wide narcotics task
110 force, [or] the state-wide organized crime investigative task force or the
111 state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force, and (iii) is acting

112 under the direct authority of the Connecticut state police, and (D) any
113 attorney authorized by law to prosecute or participate in the
114 prosecution of offenses enumerated in this chapter;

115 Sec. 7. Section 21a-420c of the general statutes is repealed and the
116 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

117 (a) As used in this section:

118 (1) "Cigarette" has the same meaning as provided in section 4-28h;

119 (2) "Electronic cigarette liquid" has the same meaning as provided in
120 section 21a-415, as amended by this act;

121 (3) "Electronic nicotine delivery system" has the same meaning as
122 provided in section 21a-415, as amended by this act;

123 (4) "Immediate threat to public health and safety" includes, but is not
124 limited to, the presence of (A) any cannabis or cannabis product in
125 connection with a violation of this section, or (B) any cigarette, tobacco
126 product, electronic cigarette liquid, electronic nicotine delivery system
127 or liquid nicotine container alongside any cannabis or cannabis product;

128 (5) "Liquid nicotine container" has the same meaning as provided in
129 section 19a-342a; and

130 (6) "Tobacco product" has the same meaning as provided in section
131 12-330a.

132 [(a)] (b) Except as provided in RERACA and chapter 420b or 420f, (1)
133 no person, other than a retailer, hybrid retailer, micro-cultivator or
134 delivery service, or an employee thereof in the course of such
135 employee's employment, may sell or offer any cannabis or cannabis
136 product to a consumer, and (2) no person, other than a hybrid retailer,
137 dispensary facility or a delivery service, or an employee thereof in the
138 course of such employee's employment, may sell or offer any cannabis
139 or cannabis product to a qualifying [patients and caregivers] patient or
140 caregiver.

141 [(b)] (c) No person except a delivery service, or an employee of a
142 delivery service, subject to the restrictions set forth in section 21a-420z,
143 acting in the course of such employee's employment may deliver any
144 cannabis or cannabis product to [consumers, patients or caregivers] a
145 consumer, qualifying patient or caregiver.

146 [(c)] (d) Any violation of the provisions of this section shall be
147 deemed an unfair or deceptive trade practice under subsection (a) of
148 section 42-110b.

149 [(d)] (e) (1) Any municipality may, by vote of its legislative body,
150 prohibit the operation of any business within such municipality that is
151 found to be in violation of the provisions of this section or if such
152 operation poses an immediate threat to public health and safety.

153 (2) If the chief executive officer of a municipality determines that a
154 business within the municipality is operating in violation of the
155 provisions of this section or poses an immediate threat to public health
156 and safety, the chief executive officer may apply to the Superior Court
157 for an order under subdivision (3) of this subsection and, upon making
158 such application, submit a written copy of such application to the
159 Attorney General.

160 (3) Upon an application under subdivision (2) of this subsection, the
161 Superior Court, upon a finding that a business within the municipality
162 is operating in violation of the provisions of this section or poses an
163 immediate threat to public health and safety, may issue forthwith, ex
164 parte and without a hearing, an order that shall direct the chief law
165 enforcement officer of the municipality to take from such business
166 possession and control of any merchandise related to such violation or
167 immediate threat to public health and safety, which merchandise shall
168 include, but need not be limited to, (A) any cannabis or cannabis
169 product, (B) any cigarette, tobacco, [or] tobacco product, electronic
170 cigarette liquid, electronic nicotine delivery system or liquid nicotine
171 container, (C) any merchandise related to the merchandise described in
172 subparagraphs (A) and (B) of this subdivision, and (D) any proceeds
173 related to the merchandise described in subparagraphs (A) to (C),

174 inclusive, of this subdivision.

175 (4) As used in this subsection, [(A) "cigarette" has the same meaning
176 as provided in section 4-28h, (B) "immediate threat to public health and
177 safety" includes, but is not limited to, the presence of (i) any cannabis or
178 cannabis product in connection with a violation of this section, or (ii)
179 any cigarette or tobacco product alongside any cannabis or cannabis
180 product, and (C)] "operation" and "operating" mean engaging in the sale
181 of, or otherwise offering for sale, goods and services to the general
182 public, including, but not limited to, through indirect retail sales.

183 [(e)] (f) (1) Any person who violates any provision of this section shall
184 be assessed a civil penalty of thirty thousand dollars for each violation.
185 Each day that such violation continues shall constitute a separate
186 offense.

187 (2) Any person who aids or abets any violation of the provisions of
188 this section shall be assessed a civil penalty of thirty thousand dollars
189 for each violation. Each day that such person aids or abets such violation
190 shall constitute a separate offense. For the purposes of this subdivision,
191 no person shall be deemed to have aided or abetted a violation of the
192 provisions of this section unless (A) such person was the owner, officer,
193 controlling shareholder or in a similar position of authority that allowed
194 such person to make command or control decisions regarding the
195 operations and management of another person who (i) is prohibited
196 from selling or offering any cannabis or cannabis product under this
197 section, and (ii) sold or offered any cannabis or cannabis product in
198 violation of this section, (B) such person knew that such other person (i)
199 is prohibited from selling or offering any cannabis or cannabis product
200 under this section, and (ii) sold or offered any cannabis or cannabis
201 product in violation of this section, (C) such person provided substantial
202 assistance or encouragement in connection with the sale or offer of such
203 cannabis or cannabis product in violation of this section, and (D) such
204 person's conduct was a substantial factor in furthering the sale or offer
205 of such cannabis or cannabis product in violation of this section.

206 (3) Any person who manages or controls a commercial property, or

207 who manages or controls a commercial building, room, space or
208 enclosure, in such person's capacity as an owner, lessee, agent,
209 employee or mortgagor, who knowingly leases, rents or makes such
210 property, building, room, space or enclosure available for use, with or
211 without compensation, for the purpose of any sale or offer of any
212 cannabis or cannabis product in violation of this section shall be
213 assessed a civil penalty of ten thousand dollars for each violation. Each
214 day that such violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

215 (4) No person other than the Attorney General, upon complaint of the
216 Commissioner of Consumer Protection, or a municipality in which the
217 violation of this section occurred shall assess any civil penalty under this
218 subsection or institute a civil action to recover any civil penalty imposed
219 under this subsection. If a municipality institutes a civil action to recover
220 any civil penalty imposed under this subsection, such penalty shall be
221 paid [first] to the municipality. [to reimburse such municipality for the
222 costs incurred in instituting such action. One-half of the remainder, if
223 any, shall be payable to the treasurer of such municipality and one-half
224 of such remainder shall be payable to the Treasurer and deposited in the
225 General Fund.]

226 [(f)] (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the
227 imposition of any criminal penalty on any person who (1) is prohibited
228 from selling or offering any cannabis or cannabis product under this
229 section, and (2) sells or offers any cannabis or cannabis product in
230 violation of this section.

231 Sec. 8. Subdivision (1) of subsection (f) of section 21a-420p of the
232 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
233 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

234 (f) (1) Subject to the requirements of this subsection and subsection
235 [(b)] (c) of section 21a-420c, as amended by this act, a micro-cultivator
236 may sell its own cannabis, including, but not limited to, its own cannabis
237 seedlings, to consumers, excluding qualifying patients and caregivers,
238 through a delivery service. No cannabis establishment other than a
239 micro-cultivator shall sell cannabis seedlings to consumers, and no

240 cannabis establishment other than a delivery service shall deliver
241 cannabis seedlings sold by a micro-cultivator to consumers.

242 Sec. 9. Subsection (d) of section 21a-420r of the general statutes is
243 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
244 *1, 2025*):

245 (d) A retailer may deliver cannabis through a delivery service or by
246 utilizing its own employees, subject to the provisions of subsection [(b)]
247 (c) of section 21a-420c, as amended by this act.

248 Sec. 10. Subsections (d) and (e) of section 21a-420t of the general
249 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
250 (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

251 (d) On and after September 1, 2021, a dispensary facility or hybrid
252 retailer may apply to the department, in a form and in a manner
253 prescribed by the commissioner, to provide delivery services through a
254 delivery service or utilizing its own employees, subject to the provisions
255 of subsection [(b)] (c) of section 21a-420c, as amended by this act, to
256 qualifying patients, caregivers, research program subjects, as defined in
257 section 21a-408, and hospice and other inpatient care facilities licensed
258 by the Department of Public Health pursuant to chapter 368v that have
259 a protocol for the handling and distribution of cannabis that has been
260 approved by the Department of Consumer Protection. A dispensary
261 facility or hybrid retailer may deliver cannabis or medical marijuana
262 products only from its own inventory to qualifying patients and
263 caregivers. If such application is approved by the commissioner, the
264 dispensary facility or hybrid retailer may commence delivery services
265 on and after January 1, 2022, provided the commissioner may authorize
266 dispensary facilities or hybrid retailers to commence delivery services
267 prior to January 1, 2022, upon forty-five days advance written notice,
268 published on the department's Internet web site.

269 (e) Hybrid retailers may commence delivery of cannabis directly to
270 consumers as of the date the first adult use cannabis sales are permitted
271 by the commissioner as set forth in subsection (f) of this section, through

272 a delivery service, or utilizing their own employees, subject to the
273 provisions of subsection [(b)] (c) of section 21a-420c, as amended by this
274 act.

275 Sec. 11. Subsection (a) of section 21a-415 of the general statutes is
276 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
277 *1, 2025*):

278 (a) As used in this chapter, section 12 of this act and section 53-344:

279 (1) "Authorized owner" means the owner or authorized designee of a
280 business entity that is applying for a registration or is registered with
281 the Department of Consumer Protection pursuant to this chapter;

282 (2) "Business entity" means any corporation, limited liability
283 company, association, partnership, sole proprietorship, government,
284 governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust or any
285 other legal entity;

286 (3) "Dealer registration" means an electronic nicotine delivery system
287 certificate of dealer registration issued by the Commissioner of
288 Consumer Protection pursuant to this section;

289 (4) "Manufacturer registration" means an electronic nicotine delivery
290 system certificate of manufacturer registration issued by the
291 Commissioner of Consumer Protection pursuant to section 21a-415a to
292 any person who mixes, compounds, repackages or resizes any nicotine-
293 containing electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product;

294 (5) "Electronic cigarette liquid" means a liquid that, when used in an
295 electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product, produces a vapor
296 that may or may not include nicotine and is inhaled by the user of such
297 electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product;

298 (6) "Electronic nicotine delivery system" means an electronic device
299 used in the delivery of nicotine or other substances to a person inhaling
300 from the device, and includes, but is not limited to, an electronic
301 cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe or

302 electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other
303 component of such device, including, but not limited to, electronic
304 cigarette liquid;

305 (7) "Vapor product" means any product that employs a heating
306 element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or
307 mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that
308 may include nicotine and is inhaled by the user of such product. "Vapor
309 product" does not include a medicinal or therapeutic product that is (A)
310 used by a licensed health care provider to treat a patient in a health care
311 setting, (B) used by a patient, as prescribed or directed by a licensed
312 health care provider in any setting, or (C) any drug or device, as defined
313 in the federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, 21 USC 321, as amended
314 from time to time, any combination product, as described in said act, 21
315 USC 353(g), as amended from time to time, or any biological product, as
316 described in 42 USC 262, as amended from time to time, and 21 CFR
317 600.3, as amended from time to time, authorized for sale by the United
318 States Food and Drug Administration;

319 (8) "Sale" or "sell" means an act done intentionally by any person,
320 whether done as principal, proprietor, agent, servant or employee, of
321 transferring, or offering or attempting to transfer, for consideration,
322 including bartering or exchanging, or offering to barter or exchange; and

323 (9) "Deliver" or "delivering" means an act done intentionally by any
324 person, whether as principal, proprietor, agent, servant or employee, of
325 transferring, or offering or attempting to transfer, physical possession
326 or control of an electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product.

327 Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) (a) No person engaged in the
328 business of shipping or transporting electronic nicotine delivery
329 systems or vapor products shall ship or transport, or cause to be shipped
330 or transported, any electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product
331 to any person in this state except to (1) a person who holds a dealer
332 registration or a manufacturer registration, or (2) a person who is an
333 officer, employee or agent of the United States government, this state or
334 a department, agency, instrumentality or political subdivision of the

335 United States or of this state, when such person is acting in accordance
336 with such person's official duties. The Commissioner of Consumer
337 Protection shall publish, on the Department of Consumer Protection's
338 Internet web site, a list of each person who holds a dealer registration or
339 a manufacturer registration.

340 (b) No common or contract carrier shall knowingly transport any
341 electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product to a residential
342 dwelling or to any person in this state who the common or contract
343 carrier reasonably believes is not a person described in subdivision (1)
344 or (2) of subsection (a) of this section. No person other than a common
345 or contract carrier shall knowingly transport any electronic nicotine
346 delivery system or vapor product to any person in this state who is not
347 a person described in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this
348 section.

349 (c) When a person engaged in the business of selling or delivering
350 electronic nicotine delivery systems or vapor products ships or
351 transports, or causes to be shipped or transported, any electronic
352 nicotine delivery system or vapor product to any person described in
353 subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section, other than in the
354 electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product manufacturer's
355 original container or wrapping, the container or wrapping shall be
356 plainly and visibly marked with the words "electronic nicotine delivery
357 system" or "vapor product", as applicable. Any person engaged in the
358 business of selling or delivering electronic nicotine delivery systems or
359 vapor products who ships, or causes to be shipped, any electronic
360 nicotine delivery system or vapor product to any person described in
361 subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section (1) shall require, as
362 a condition of such sale or delivery, such person to sign an
363 acknowledgment of receipt and provide proper proof of age, and (2)
364 may not sell or deliver such electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor
365 product to such person unless such person provides proper proof of age.

366 (d) Any electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product shipped
367 or transported in violation of this section is a common nuisance and is

368 subject to immediate seizure by the Commissioner of Consumer
369 Protection, any agent or employee of the commissioner authorized to
370 make such seizure or any peace officer of this state whom the
371 commissioner has directed to make such seizure. The commissioner or
372 such agent, employee or peace officer shall hold such electronic nicotine
373 delivery system or vapor product subject to confiscation and destruction
374 by order of a court of competent jurisdiction. All costs of such seizure,
375 confiscation and destruction shall be borne by the shipper or
376 transporter.

377 (e) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection may impose a civil
378 penalty of not more than ten thousand dollars for each violation of this
379 section. For purposes of this subsection, each shipment or transport of
380 electronic nicotine delivery systems or vapor products shall constitute a
381 separate violation. The Attorney General, upon request of the
382 commissioner, may bring an action in the superior court for the judicial
383 district of Hartford to collect such civil penalty and for any injunctive or
384 equitable relief. In any action brought by the Attorney General to
385 enforce the provisions of this section, the state shall be entitled to
386 recover, when the state is the prevailing party, the costs of investigation,
387 expert witness fees, costs of the action and reasonable attorneys' fees.

388 (f) A violation of this section shall be an unfair or deceptive act or
389 practice pursuant to subsection (a) of section 42-110b of the general
390 statutes.

391 Sec. 13. Section 21a-421aaa of the general statutes is repealed and the
392 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

393 (a) Any cannabis establishment licensee or any servant or agent of a
394 licensee who sells or delivers cannabis [or cannabis paraphernalia] to
395 any person under twenty-one years of age shall be guilty of a class [A
396 misdemeanor] E felony.

397 (b) Any cannabis establishment licensee or any servant or agent of a
398 licensee who sells or delivers cannabis paraphernalia to any person
399 under twenty-one years of age shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

400 For purposes of this section, "paraphernalia" has the same meaning as
 401 provided in section 21a-420, as amended by this act.

402 Sec. 14. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) Any cannabis establishment
 403 licensee or any servant or agent of a licensee who sells or delivers any
 404 synthetic cannabinoid to any person shall be guilty of a class E felony.
 405 For purposes of this section, "synthetic cannabinoid" has the same
 406 meaning as provided in section 21a-240 of the general statutes.

407 Sec. 15. Section 21a-418 of the general statutes is repealed. (*Effective*
 408 *October 1, 2025*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	21a-420(1)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	54-41a(6)
Sec. 7	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-420c
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-420p(f)(1)
Sec. 9	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-420r(d)
Sec. 10	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-420t(d) and (e)
Sec. 11	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-415(a)
Sec. 12	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 13	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	21a-421aaa
Sec. 14	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 15	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	Repealer section

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Consumer Protection, Dept.	GF - Cost	608,080	593,080
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	231,265	231,265
Judicial Dept. (Probation); Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Impact	See Below	See Below
Department of Administrative Services; Department of Administrative Services - Workers' Comp. Claims	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
All Municipalities	Potential Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below
Municipal Police Departments	STATE MANDATE ² - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill makes various changes regarding the states cannabis, hemp,

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

²State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

and tobacco laws resulting in the following impact.

Section 2 creates a state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force within the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) resulting in a cost to the state. To meet the requirements of the bill, DCP will need to hire four additional employees³ for a salary and other expenses cost of \$392,276 in FY 26 and \$382,276 in FY 27, along with associated fringe benefit costs of \$148,704 per year. The additional employees are needed to: 1) coordinate the activities of the task force, 2) apply for federal, state, or local grants, 3) coordinate with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, local police departments, or other state agencies, and 4) help conduct investigations. It is anticipated that existing DCP cannabis employees will assist the task force as well.

Sections 3 and 4, which allow the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to select police officers of any municipality of the state to act temporarily as special state police officers to carry out the duties of the state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force, result in a potential cost to municipal police departments to the extent their officers are selected to work on the task force. Under the bill, municipalities are responsible for fully compensating any personnel assigned to the task force and such municipalities will likely incur overtime costs to cover the shifts to which these personnel would have otherwise been assigned.

Section 3 makes the state liable for any losses, damages, or liabilities arising from actions of the municipal police officers while working on the cannabis and hemp enforcement task force. This results in a potential cost to the state to the extent such liabilities occur.

Section 5 creates a state-wide cannabis and hemp enforcement task force policy board resulting in no fiscal impact to the state because the board has the expertise to meet the requirements of the bill.

Section 7 results in a potential revenue gain to municipalities and

³The new employees consist of a state program manager, drug control agent, staff attorney, and administrative assistant.

associated potential revenue loss to the General Fund beginning in FY 26. The potential revenue gain is a result of a provision in the bill that allows municipalities to keep all the fine revenue recovered from violations of selling or offering cannabis products without a license. Currently, half of this revenue is deposited into the state's General Fund.⁴

Section 7 also adds to the list of potential violations which are subject to a civil penalty of \$30,000 resulting in a potential revenue gain to the state to the extent violations occur.

Section 12 creates a new unfair trade practice violation for certain electronic nicotine delivery systems or vapor product violations resulting in a cost to DCP. To meet the requirements of this section, DCP will need to hire a drug control agent and a staff attorney for a salary and other expenses cost of \$215,804 in FY 26 and \$210,804 in FY 27, along with associated fringe benefit costs of \$82,562 per year. This is anticipated to result in a significant increase in complaints and investigations.

This section also creates a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 per violation resulting in a potential revenue gain to the state to the extent that violations occur.

Section 13 increases the penalty for selling cannabis products to individuals under 21 from a class A misdemeanor to a class E felony and decreases the penalty for selling cannabis paraphernalia to individuals under 21 from a class A misdemeanor to a class C misdemeanor. This results in a net potential cost to the Department of Correction and the Judicial Department for incarceration or probation and a net potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines.⁵ On average, the marginal

⁴These fines are \$30,000 for each violation and \$10,000 for anyone who controls property and knowingly makes the area available for the violations to occur. Each day a violation continues can result in an additional offense.

⁵No charges nor associated revenue have been recorded under CGS § 21a-421aaa.

cost to the state for incarcerating an offender for the year is \$3,300⁶ while the average marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than \$600⁷ each year for adults and \$450 each year for juveniles.

Section 14 creates a class E felony for selling synthetic cannabinoids, which results in a potential cost to the Department of Correction and the Judicial Department for incarceration or probation and a potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of municipal police officers assigned as special state police officers, number of violations, employee wage increases, and inflation.

⁶Inmate marginal cost is based on increased consumables (e.g., food, clothing, water, sewage, living supplies, etc.) This does not include a change in staffing costs or utility expenses because these would only be realized if a unit or facility opened.

⁷ Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant. This does not include a cost for additional supervision by a probation officer unless a new offense is anticipated to result in enough additional offenders to require additional probation officers.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7181*****AN ACT CONCERNING ENFORCEMENT OF THE STATE'S CANNABIS, HEMP AND TOBACCO LAWS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill creates a Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Taskforce within the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) to enforce the state's laws on cannabis and cannabis products, infused beverages, hemp and hemp products, and moderate-THC hemp products. It allows the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) commissioner to temporarily appoint certain municipal police personnel as special state police officers to carry out the taskforce's duties. These police officers, while assigned to the taskforce, have the same powers, duties, privileges, and immunities as a state police officer.

The bill also places additional requirements and restrictions on selling, shipping, and transporting cannabis, cannabis products, tobacco, electronic nicotine delivery systems, vapor products (i.e. e-cigarettes), and synthetic cannabinoids. It does so by, among other things, incorporating additional items into existing requirements and prohibitions and by modifying and adding penalties.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, except the taskforce provisions are effective July 1, 2025.

§§ 1-6 — STATEWIDE CANNABIS AND HEMP ENFORCEMENT TASKFORCE***Taskforce Powers and Duties***

The bill establishes a Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Taskforce within DCP for the effective and cooperative enforcement of Connecticut's laws on the cultivation, manufacturing, distribution,

transportation, display, purchase, sale, dispensing, possession, and use of cannabis and cannabis products, infused beverages, hemp and hemp products, and moderate-THC hemp products (see BACKGROUND).

The bill allows the taskforce to:

1. conduct any investigation needed in the state;
2. request and receive any federal, state, or local agency cooperation and assistance in performing its duties, including temporarily assigned personnel as needed;
3. enter into mutual assistance and cooperation agreements with other states on law enforcement matters related to these products that extend across state lines; and
4. consult and exchange information and personnel with other states' agencies on law enforcement problems of mutual concern with these products.

Additionally, the bill allows the DCP commissioner, within available appropriations, to appoint a director and other personnel as he deems needed for the taskforce's duties.

Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Task Force Policy Board

The bill also establishes a Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Task Force Policy Board, within DCP for administrative purposes only, consisting of the DCP, DESPP, and Department of Revenue Services commissioners, the state attorney general, and the chief state's attorney.

The policy board must direct and supervise the formulation of policies and operating procedures and coordinate the taskforce's activities with law enforcement agencies in and outside of Connecticut. The board may apply for and administer any federal, state, local, or private appropriations or grant funds made available to operate the taskforce.

Temporary Special State Police Officers

Upon the taskforce's request, the DESPP commissioner may select certain municipal police personnel to temporarily act as special state police officers to carry out the taskforce's duties that the commissioner, in consultation with the taskforce, deems needed. Municipal police personnel appointed to the taskforce must be selected from a list recommended by municipal police chiefs and approved by the Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Task Force Policy Board.

Under the bill, each municipality is responsible for fully compensating the municipal police personnel temporarily assigned to the taskforce, and the compensation is payable while the personnel is on duty with the taskforce.

For indemnification purposes, the municipal police personnel are deemed to be acting as state employees against any losses, damages, or liabilities from the service and activities of the taskforce. This is only while the municipal police personnel are assigned to and performing taskforce duties.

Under the bill, any municipal police officer, while assigned to duty with the taskforce and working at the DESPP commissioner's or taskforce director's direction, has the same powers, duties, privileges, and immunities as a state police officer, when acting within the scope of his or her authority.

As under existing law for the statewide narcotics taskforce and the statewide organized crime investigative task force, the bill allows a municipal police officer who is a special state police officer assigned to the statewide cannabis and hemp enforcement taskforce and who is acting under the direct authority of the State Police to be an investigative officer for wiretapping and electronic surveillance purposes.

Under existing law, an investigative officer may, among other things, be authorized to intercept wire communications, with a court order (CGS § 54-41b).

§§ 7-10 — PROHIBITIONS ON DISTRIBUTING CANNABIS AND CANNABIS PRODUCTS***Prohibitions on Selling, Offering, or Delivering Cannabis or Cannabis Products***

In general, existing law limits who can sell, offer, or deliver cannabis to certain licensees. Current law generally prohibits anyone other than:

1. retailers, hybrid retailers, micro-cultivators, delivery services, or their employees from selling or offering cannabis to consumers;
2. hybrid retailers, dispensary facilities, delivery services, or their employees from selling or offering cannabis to qualifying medical marijuana patients and caregivers; and
3. delivery services or their employees from delivering cannabis to consumers, patients, or caregivers.

The bill adds cannabis products as items only these licensees and employees may sell, offer, or deliver. As under existing law, a violation is deemed a Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act (CUTPA) violation.

Municipal Prohibition and Seizure

Existing law allows municipalities to take certain actions if any business (1) is found to violate any of the above sale, offer, or delivery prohibitions or (2) poses an “immediate threat to public health and safety.” They may, by legislative vote, prohibit these businesses from operating in the municipality and apply to the Superior Court for an order directing the municipality’s chief law enforcement officer to take possession and control of any related merchandise from the business, including any cannabis, cannabis product, cigarette, tobacco or tobacco product, any merchandise associated with those items, and any proceeds from them.

The bill broadens the circumstances under which a municipality may prohibit a business by adding additional items to what is considered an “immediate threat to public health and safety.” Under existing law, the term includes the presence of any (1) cannabis or cannabis product in

connection with a violation of any of the above sale, offer, or delivery prohibitions or (2) cigarette or tobacco product alongside any cannabis or cannabis product. The bill adds the presence of the following alongside any cannabis or cannabis product: any electronic cigarette liquid, electronic nicotine delivery system, or liquid nicotine container (see BACKGROUND).

Correspondingly, the bill allows law enforcement to take these additional items, any merchandise associated with these items, and any proceeds from these items, upon a court order. It also requires the chief executive to submit a written copy of his or her court order application to the state attorney general upon making it.

Civil Fines

By law, a violator of the above laws must be assessed a civil fine of \$30,000 for each violation. Additionally, anyone who aids or abets these violations must also be assessed a \$30,000 civil fine for each violation. The law also imposes a \$10,000 civil fine for each violation by anyone who manages or controls certain commercial property and knowingly makes the area available for use in these violations. In all three cases, each day a violation continues is a separate offense.

Under current law, if a municipality institutes a civil action to recover an imposed civil fine, the fine must be paid to the municipality first to reimburse it for the costs for instituting the action, with half of the remainder, if any, paid to the municipality's treasurer and the other half to the state treasurer for deposit into the General Fund. The bill instead allows the municipality to keep all of the fine.

§§ 11, 12 & 15 — E-CIGARETTES

The bill places substantially similar restrictions on and requirements for shipping, transporting, and selling electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products (i.e. e-cigarettes) as under existing law for cigarettes.

Shipping. The bill only allows businesses to ship or transport e-cigarettes to a (1) DCP-registered e-cigarette dealer or manufacturer or

(2) local, state, or federal government employee, officer, or agent acting within his or her official duties. It relatedly requires the DCP commissioner to publish on the department's website a list of each person holding a dealer or manufacturer registration.

The bill also prohibits common and contract carriers from knowingly delivering e-cigarettes to a residence or to someone in Connecticut they reasonably believe is not one of the entities authorized to receive them. It additionally prohibits anyone other than a common or contract carrier from knowingly delivering e-cigarettes to someone in Connecticut they reasonably believe is not one of the entities authorized to receive them.

Requirements. Current law requires e-cigarette dealers who sell e-cigarettes and ship them directly to in-state consumers (e.g., through online sales) to (1) get the signature of a person aged 21 or older at the shipping address prior to delivery and (2) require the signer to provide a driver's license or identification card as proof of age. It also requires the seller to ensure that the shipping label on these packages conspicuously states the following: "CONTAINS AN ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR VAPOR PRODUCT - SIGNATURE OF A PERSON AGE 21 OR OLDER REQUIRED FOR DELIVERY."

The bill eliminates this law and replaces it with different procedures for delivery to authorized individuals, which do not allow direct sales to consumers (see above). Specifically, it requires anyone selling or delivering e-cigarettes to plainly and visibly mark their packages with the words "electronic nicotine delivery system" or "vapor product," as applicable when they do not ship them in the e-cigarette manufacturer's original container or wrapping. It also requires those shipping e-cigarettes to make delivery to an authorized recipient conditional on the recipient's signing an acknowledgement of receipt and presenting proper proof of age.

Seizure. Under the bill, any e-cigarette shipped or transported in violation of these provisions is a common nuisance and subject to immediate seizure by the DCP commissioner or any authorized

department agent or employee or any peace officer the commissioner has directed to make the seizure. These individuals must hold the e-cigarettes subject to confiscation and destruction by a court order. The shipper or transporter is liable for all seizure, confiscation, and destruction costs.

Penalties. The DCP commissioner may impose a maximum civil penalty of \$10,000 for each violation, where each shipment or transport constitutes a separate offense. The attorney general, upon the DCP commissioner's request, may bring an action in the Hartford Superior Court to collect the civil penalty and for any injunctive or equitable relief. In any enforcement action the attorney general brings where the state wins, the state may recover the investigation costs, expert witness fees, costs of the action, and reasonable attorney's fees.

The bill also deems a violation of these provisions a CUTPA violation.

§§ 13 & 14 — PENALTIES AGAINST CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENTS FOR ILLEGAL SALES TO UNDERAGED INDIVIDUALS AND SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS

The bill modifies the penalties for a cannabis establishment licensee (or their servants or agents) selling or delivering cannabis or cannabis paraphernalia to someone under age 21. It increases the penalty for illegally selling or delivering cannabis from a class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to 364 days imprisonment, up to a \$2,000 fine, or both, to a class E felony, which is punishable by up to three years imprisonment, up to a \$3,500 fine, or both. It decreases the penalty for illegally selling or delivering cannabis paraphernalia, from a class A misdemeanor to a class C misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to three months imprisonment, up to a \$500 fine, or both.

Existing law prohibits cannabis establishments from selling synthetic cannabinoids, which are classified as schedule I drugs (i.e. a drug with no current accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse) (CGS § 21a-243). The bill makes it a class E felony for a cannabis establishment (or their servants or agents) to sell or deliver synthetic cannabinoids to anyone.

By law, “synthetic cannabinoids” are any substance converted by a chemical process to create a cannabinoid or cannabinoid-like substance that has (1) structural features that allow interaction with at least one of the known cannabinoid-specific receptors or (2) any physiological or psychotropic response on at least one cannabinoid specific receptor. It includes hexahydrocannabinol (HHC and HXC) and hydrox4phc (PHC) but does not include manufactured cannabinoids.

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The House referred the bill (File 632) to the Judiciary Committee, which reported out a substitute that eliminated provisions (1) restricting tobacco product shipments, (2) imposing CUTPA penalties for tobacco and tobacco product shipment violations, and (3) imposing criminal penalties on e-cigarette shipment violations. The substitute also reduces the penalties for illegally selling cannabis paraphernalia.

Definitions

By law and under the bill, “cannabis” has the same meaning as “marijuana,” which is all parts of a plant or species of the genus cannabis, whether growing or not, and including its resin, compounds, manufactures, salts, derivatives, mixtures, and preparations; high-THC hemp products; manufactured cannabinoids; or cannabimon, cannabinol, cannabidiol (CBD), and similar compounds, except CBD derived from hemp. Marijuana and cannabis do not include the following:

1. a plant’s mature stalks; fiber made from the stalks; oil or cake made from the plant’s seeds; a compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or preparation made from the stalks other than the extracted resin;
2. the plant’s seeds;
3. hemp with a total THC concentration of up to 0.3% on a dry weight basis that is not a high-THC product;

4. any substance the federal Food and Drug Administration approves as a drug and that is reclassified in any controlled substance schedule, or that it unschedules; or
5. infused beverages.

A “cannabis product” is cannabis in the form of a cannabis concentrate or a product that contains cannabis and at least one other cannabis or noncannabis ingredient or component, and is intended for use or consumption. It does not include the cannabis flower.

An “infused beverage” is a beverage that (1) is not alcoholic and is intended for human consumption and (2) contains, or is advertised, labeled, or offered for sale as containing, a total THC content of less than three milligrams (mg) per container, which must be at least 12 fluid ounces.

Under state and federal law, “hemp” is the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of it, including seeds and derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 THC concentration of not more than 0.3% on a dry weight basis.

“Hemp products” means all manufacturer hemp products and producer hemp products. A “moderate-THC hemp product” is a manufacturer hemp product that has total THC of between 0.5 mg and 5 mgs, on a per-container basis and is not an infused beverage or legacy infused beverage. A “manufacturer hemp product” is a commodity manufactured from the hemp plant for commercial or research purposes that is intended for human ingestion, inhalation, absorption, or other internal consumption, contains a THC concentration of not more than 0.3% on a dry weight basis or per volume or weight of the product, and is not an infused beverage. A “producer hemp product” is any of the following produced in Connecticut: raw hemp product, fiber-based hemp product, or animal hemp food product that contains a THC concentration of not more than 0.3% on a dry weight basis or per volume or weight of the product.

“Electronic cigarette liquid” means a liquid that, when used in an electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product, produces a vapor that may or may not include nicotine and is inhaled by the user.

“Electronic nicotine delivery system” means an electronic device used in the delivery of nicotine or other substances to a person inhaling from the device, and includes an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, or electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of the device, including electronic cigarette liquid.

“Liquid nicotine container” means a container that holds a liquid substance containing nicotine that is sold, marketed, or intended for use in an electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product, except it does not include the container that the manufacturer prefills and seals and is not intended to be opened by the consumer.

“Tobacco product” means any product made from or otherwise containing tobacco, but expressly excludes cigarettes, electronic cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery systems, and vapor products.

CUTPA

By law, CUTPA prohibits businesses from engaging in unfair and deceptive acts or practices. It allows the DCP commissioner, under specified procedures, to issue regulations defining an unfair trade practice, investigate complaints, issue cease and desist orders, order restitution in cases involving less than \$10,000, impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000, enter into consent agreements, ask the attorney general to seek injunctive relief, and accept voluntary statements of compliance. It also allows individuals to sue. Courts may issue restraining orders; award actual and punitive damages, costs, and reasonable attorney’s fees; and impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000 for willful violations and up to \$25,000 for a restraining order violation.

Related Bills

sSB 970 (File 605), favorably reported by the General Law Committee,

(1) limits unlicensed manufactured hemp product sales to low-THC hemp products and (2) modifies various definitions, including “cannabis,” “marijuana,” and “synthetic cannabinoids.”

sHB 7275, favorably reported by the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, places similar restrictions on shipping and transporting e-cigarettes and vapor products.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/24/2025)

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 37 Nay 0 (04/25/2025)