

Lou Mansolillo

From: Sasha Gorski <sasha@talariaco.com>
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 12:23 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: Oppose - H5829

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chairman, House Committee on Corporations
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Subject: Strong Opposition to H 5829 – An Act Relating to Food and Drugs – The Rhode Island Cannabis Act

Dear Chairman Solomon,

My name is Sasha Gorski and I am a co-owner of Talaria, a small family run cultivation here in Providence and I oppose bill 5829.

Bill 5829 currently under consideration would allow the sale of hemp-derived beverages containing up to 10mg of delta-9 THC at bars and liquor stores. This legislation—if passed—would create a separate, lightly regulated distribution channel for psychoactive products that are chemically identical to those sold in licensed cannabis dispensaries.

Hemp manufactures across the country are taking advantage of an unintended loophole in the federal farm bill. These manufactures are taking naturally occurring CBD and through unregulated scientific processes, changing this compound into delta-9 THC. The delta-9 THC in these hemp products, unlike cannabis products sold through dispensaries, is synthesized in ways that we do not understand and is expressly banned by the FDA as a food additive: 21 USC SS 331(II).

The current Rhode Island consumable CBD regulations (230-RICR-80-10-1) section H(1)c states the following: “Product Prohibitions: No hemp-derived consumable CBD product intended for retail sale shall: Be combined with alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, and/or ANY SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS” Despite repeatedly bringing this up to the Cannabis Control Commission and the Department of Business Regulations they have not enforced this section of their own regulations.

Furthermore current DBR rules for hemp products allow up to 5mg of delta-9 THC per multipack. For comparison, licensed dispensaries are capped at 10mg of THC per serving. The proposed bill would permit hemp-derived products at that same potency to be sold outside of this framework, without the same consumer protections.

This bill proposes minimal licensing requirements for hemp wholesalers and retailers, lacks comprehensive product tracking, and imposes few packaging or safety standards. These provisions stand in stark contrast to the strict regulatory framework governing Rhode Island’s licensed cannabis industry, where producers must adhere to high compliance costs, undergo seed-to-sale tracking, follow detailed potency and packaging rules as well as being heavily taxed.

This legislative effort is taking place while the Cannabis Control Commission and Cannabis Advisory Board have spent the past two years carefully designing a responsible, equitable, and tightly regulated cannabis program.

Rhode Island’s in-state cannabis cultivators are currently prohibited from manufacturing or selling these beverages to liquor stores, further entrenching an uneven and unsustainable market structure.

I hope that you will take this time to critically assess the long-term consequences of this bill. Without parity in regulation, enforcement, and access, this legislation risks undermining the integrity of Rhode Island's legal cannabis market, disadvantaging local small businesses, and compromising public health safeguards.