



May 15, 2025

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

Subject: H 6270 – An Act Relating to Food and Drugs – The Rhode Island Cannabis Act

Dear Chairman Solomon,

I write to provide context regarding House Bill 6270, which would prohibit the sale of beverages and drink mix powders containing hemp-derived delta-9 THC unless regulated under the state's cannabis framework.

This legislation addresses an important issue: the sale of intoxicating hemp-derived products, including beverages, that currently fall outside cannabis regulation but may still have psychoactive effects. While legal under federal hemp definitions, these products raise questions about appropriate oversight and consumer protection.

Currently, the Department of Business Regulation (DBR) regulates these products under Rhode Island's hemp program. DBR has established rules covering labeling, potency, testing, and packaging, including recent updates aimed at reducing accidental overconsumption and improving consumer understanding.

The Governor's FY2026 Budget Article 3 proposes a transfer of regulatory authority over hemp-derived cannabinoids from DBR to the Cannabis Control Commission. If enacted, this shift would enable the Commission to establish consistent policies across cannabis and hemp-derived products.

Additionally, the Rhode Island Cannabis Act anticipated this evolution, instructing the Commission to study and evaluate hemp consumables. Should regulatory authority shift, the Commission plans to conduct a thorough review of existing rules, engage stakeholders, and determine what additional safeguards may be needed to ensure health, safety, and equity. That work requires time, expertise, and deliberate engagement.

As the Committee considers H6270, we respectfully emphasize the value of continued study, interagency coordination, and engagement with small businesses currently operating under existing hemp rules. The Commission remains committed to providing expertise, data, and support to the General Assembly in navigating this evolving policy area.

Thank you for your attention and continued leadership.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Ahern, Chairperson

Rhode Island Cannabis Control Commission

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations
The Honorable Scott Slater
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy