

HB 1973 -- INDUSTRIAL HEMP

SPONSOR: Redmon

This bill exempts industrial hemp, which is defined as *Cannabis sativa* L. containing no greater than three-tenths of one percent THC, from the definition of marijuana and the list of controlled substances. It will be legal for any person who has received an industrial hemp license from the Missouri Department of Agriculture to grow, harvest, and cultivate industrial hemp. A person who wants to produce and handle agricultural hemp seed for sale to licensed industrial hemp growers and handlers must also receive an agricultural hemp seed production permit from the department.

The bill also creates an industrial hemp agricultural pilot program and enacts requirements for applying for an industrial hemp license and agricultural hemp seed production permit. The department must issue a license or permit to an applicant who meets the statutory requirements and upon satisfactory completion of a fingerprint criminal history background check. A license or permit may not be issued to a person who has been found guilty of a felony offense within 10 years or a person who, at any time, has been found guilty of a felony offense under state or federal law regarding the possession, distribution, manufacturing, cultivation, or use of a controlled substance. A person who grows industrial hemp without a valid industrial hemp license is subject to an administrative fine of \$500 and must obtain an industrial hemp license within 30 days. If the person obtains the license within 30 days, the fine is refunded. If the person fails to obtain a license within 30 days, the person is fined \$1,000 per day until the person obtains a license or the crop is destroyed.

Upon issuance of a license or permit, information regarding all license and permit holders shall be forwarded to the Missouri State Highway Patrol. An industrial hemp license or agricultural hemp seed production permit is nontransferable except to a spouse or child who otherwise meets the requirements for a license or permit, is valid for a three-year term unless revoked by the department, and may be renewed as determined by the department.

Every grower or handler will be subject to an industrial hemp plant monitoring system. The department may inspect a grower or handler to ensure compliance with statutes, department rules, the monitoring system, or a final department order directed to the grower's or handler's industrial hemp operations or activities. The department may also inspect any industrial hemp crop during the crop's growth phase and take a representative composite sample for field analysis. Crop exceeding the allowable THC limits may be detained, seized, or embargoed.

The department may charge growers and handlers reasonable fees as determined by the department and adopt rules to administer the program. The department is also allowed to revoke or refuse to issue or renew an industrial hemp license or agricultural hemp seed production permit and to impose a civil penalty of not less than \$2,500 or more than \$50,000 for a violation of the requirements of the license or permit, department rules relating to growing or handling industrial hemp, the monitoring system, or a final order of the department that is specifically directed to the grower's or handler's industrial hemp operations or activities. Licenses may also be revoked or not issued if other rules or regulations not pertaining to hemp are violated.

This bill is the same as SB 584 (2016).