

HCS HBs 1007 & 937 -- HEMP OIL FOR TREATMENT OF SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS

SPONSOR: Evans

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 13 to 0.

Currently, the law allows people with intractable epilepsy to possess and use hemp extract to treat the condition. This bill expands the current law to allow individuals with other serious conditions to use hemp extract as well. Serious condition is defined as Cancer, HIV, AIDS, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Parkinson's disease, Multiple sclerosis, spinal cord damage, Epilepsy, Inflammatory bowel disease, neuropathies, Huntington's disease, or certain specified symptoms or complications associated with the conditions listed above.

Currently, the department must issue a registration card to a person who provides a statement signed by a neurologist that the person suffers from intractable Epilepsy and may benefit from treatment with hemp extract. This bill requires the department to also issue registration cards to people who provide certification signed by a physician that the person suffers from one of the previously mentioned serious conditions. The physician or neurologist must also indicate to the department that he or she is qualified to treat the condition, and that the patient is under the practitioner's continuing care.

The maximum level of Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) permitted in hemp extract under current law is 0.3% by weight. This bill raises the maximum level to 0.9% by weight. This bill also lowers the minimum level of cannabidiol required in hemp extracted from 5% by weight to 1.5% by weight.

This bill specifies that individuals and health care entities will not be punished for facilitating the lawful use of hemp extract. This bill creates certain background checks and residency requirements for prospective producers of cannabis to be used in the production of hemp extract. The residency requirements contain a grandfather clause. A maximum of 10 licenses may be issued for the cultivation of cannabis to be used in the production of hemp extract.

This bill is the same as HB 937 and similar to SB 371 (2017).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that only 64 hemp extract registration

cards have been issued in this state because the current law is too restrictive. Hemp extract is not the same as marijuana, there is no psychoactive effect associated with the use of hemp extract. Hemp extract should be a legal alternative to other conditions beyond just intractable Epilepsy. Unlike opioid pain medications, hemp extract has no known addictive qualities. But hemp extract does treat pain, in some cases better than narcotics and without the side effects.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Evans and Beleaf, LLC.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.