

## **Virginia Task Force to Analyze Industrial Hemp Extracts and Other Substances Containing Tetrahydrocannabinol Intended for Human Consumption**

**For Task Force Meeting on July 7, 2022**

**U.S. Hemp Roundtable’s initial public comments addressing “whether any statutory or regulatory modifications are necessary to ensure the safe and responsible manufacture and sale of industrial hemp extracts and other substances containing tetrahydrocannabinol that are intended for human consumption, orally or by inhalation, in the Commonwealth of Virginia”**

*Summary: Age limitations, while both appropriate and necessary for the sale of intoxicating cannabis products, should not be applied to nonintoxicating hemp products.*

The U.S. Hemp Roundtable is the hemp industry’s leading national advocacy organization. For nearly a decade, the Roundtable’s more-than-100 members have stood at the forefront of ensuring a fair regulatory environment for the safe and responsible manufacture and sale of hemp products. Most recently, in light of emerging products like delta-8 THC and HHC, the Roundtable has worked with legislators and regulators to understand and respond to concerns and potential safety risks caused by intoxicating cannabis products.

We applaud the efforts of Governor Youngkin and the General Assembly to restrict the provision of intoxicating cannabis products to regulated, adult-only marketplaces. Intoxicating compounds must be strictly regulated for safety and kept out of the hands of minors.

Unfortunately, HB 30, while intended to crack down on intoxicating cannabis products, swept with too broad a brush and restricted *any* hemp extract, food with hemp extract, or ingestible or inhalable hemp substance with *any* amount of THC to persons 21 or older. In effect, even nonintoxicating hemp products with legal amounts of THC are captured—essentially age-restricting all but topical, cosmetic-type hemp products.

It is important that age restrictions are appropriately narrow, so consumers are not denied access to nonintoxicating health, lifestyle, and wellness products on which they depend. Age restrictions like the far-reaching one in HB 30 send an inaccurate message to consumers that nonintoxicating products are dangerous or should be associated with and regulated in the same way as alcohol or tobacco. Moreover, when faced with having to separate age-restricted products or verify age at the point of sale, many retailers—especially those that do not sell other age-restricted products—may choose not to carry these products altogether. This hurts Virginia farmers, business owners, and consumers.

To be clear, the Roundtable does not oppose age restrictions in all forms. In fact, the Roundtable has openly supported stricter controls for intoxicating cannabis products masquerading as hemp. A possible solution—and one that may be right for Virginia—is to treat intoxicating compounds like adult-use cannabis. Virginia, of course, already has an established regulatory framework for cannabis. Nonintoxicating hemp products should be excluded. Determining which products are

intoxicating should be based on scientific analysis and industry data and input, not on arbitrary THC limits.

The Roundtable expresses its gratitude to the Task Force for focusing on the important topic of the safe and responsible manufacture and sale of THC-containing hemp extracts in Virginia, and thanks the Task Force for the invitation to submit comments for today's meeting.

The Roundtable intends to submit more comprehensive written comments for the Task Force's consideration, including comments addressing other portions of HB 30.