



VHC Legislative Committee Recommendations for the 2023 General Assembly

Industrial Hemp (Grain and Fiber) Legislative Goals:

- One percent overall THC level for the definition of hemp in Virginia and completely decriminalize up to this one percent level for farmers, processors, and consumers. Protections should be in the definition of marijuana. We must also tie the definition of hemp and its final products' THC level to the federal code (US Farm Bill) as it changes every five years. This is the direction the federal law is going for the 2023 farm bill, and it makes sense for Virginia to be on the forefront of this commonsense policy shift and tied to federal policy from which all authorization of the Virginia hemp industry stem.
- Separate Fiber and Grain hemp production from hemp flower production in terms of licensing and regulations. VDACS and the Board of Agriculture should continue regulate industrial hemp.
- Legalize industrial hemp for animal feed. There is no good reason humans of all ages are completely fine to eat hemp food products, but we cannot feed them to our animals and livestock.
- Request a budget of \$700,000 for the VDACS marketing department to earmark funds for the further education and promotion of Virginia hemp products and the Virginia hemp industry in general. Request for grants or subsidies for bringing hemp processing and manufacturing plants into Virginia to create hemp industry jobs.
- Allow for remediation of hemp when it tests over the allowable federal definition of THC percentage in hemp - into hemp products that are not for human consumption.
- There should be no requirements for fingerprints, FBI background checks, or other burdensome red tape to get through when Virginia farmers must apply for a hemp license. The license fee should be affordable and have a cap (recommended \$250) and there should be fewer overall burdens placed on Virginia farmers growing this agricultural crop. Growing hemp for fiber and grain should be treated much like growing corn, wheat, or soybeans.
- A certified hemp seed program should be started at VDACS which would give farmers guidelines on which seeds were tested to be under the federal THC level limits for industrial hemp seed.

Non-Intoxicating Hemp Wellness Products made from Natural Hemp Extract (CBD,CBG,CBN)

Legislative Goals:

- Redefine hemp products and exempt products with a low THC mg level per serving (science-based determination from a newly formed panel of cannabis industry scientists) from regulations intended for intoxicating products (i.e. over 21 restrictions and labeling requirements)
- Redefine testing across the board for all hemp products to separate the intoxicating from the non-intoxicating. Spell out which cannabinoids are intoxicating and those that are not. VDACS should regulate all non-intoxicating cannabinoids (i.e. CBD, CBG, CBN) and those substances should be allowed in food, beverage, and other wellness products like topicals, and over the counter as dietary supplements without strict regulations as intended for intoxicating products (i.e. Delta-8, Delta-9, Delta-10). The VCCA should regulate all intoxicating cannabinoids final products no matter their source.
- Offer guidance and education to VDACS and legislators by creating a citizen's board where those who are part of the Virginia hemp industry can have real input in policy direction and creation. Request the budget allocation of 250,000 for the creation of a hemp ambassadors' program that is run through VDACS marketing.
- Allow companies to add hemp extract that is purchased from a licensed hemp processor to be added as an ingredient to their products without requirements for a separate hemp processors license.

Intoxicating Cannabis Products made from High THC Cannabis or Natural Hemp Extract (Delta 9, Delta 8, Delta 10) Legislative Goals:

- Make sure Virginia small businesses and Virginia farmers have a seat at the table in the new retail cannabis sales markets. The out of state "big marijuana" medical monopoly corporations should not take precedence. Those corporations should focus on the medical side of the market and integrate into the Virginia medical system.
- Recreational craft cannabis manufacturing licenses (much like the craft beer, cider, liquor, and wine industry) should be created to be straightforward and unlimited. The VCCA should regulate intoxicating cannabinoids finished products with fair, simple, and straightforward regulations. Retailers should be able to sell with an affordable retailer's license like alcohol and tobacco is sold in stores. This is the only way to actually compete with the growing black and grey cannabis markets that already exists.
- Provide a framework to legalize places of intoxicating cannabis consumption much like the ABC regulates places for citizens to consume intoxicating alcohol. The VCCA should regulate these locations much like the ABC regulates bars and restaurants.
- Provide a VCCA program to provide low interest loans and grants for disadvantaged areas in Virginia that need an economic boost such as Southside Virginia and the Hampton Roads areas among other regions throughout Virginia.