

# Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5155

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF CANNABIS, CANNABIS

**Title:** PRODUCTS AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

**Vote Date:** 3/15/2022

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 2/22/2022

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Committee on Children

## **CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Rep. Jaime S. Foster  
Rep. Geraldo C. Reyes  
Sen. Saud Anwar  
Rep. Anthony L. Nolan

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

H.B. 5155 will require printing of safety warnings regarding the danger of cannabis/ opioids to children on the receipts for prescriptions as well as a sign in dispensaries (specifically regarding danger to children). Instructs the Department of Consumer Protection to develop and distribute documents containing information concerning the safe storage of cannabis, cannabis programs, prescription drugs. This bill aims to inform parents to the very real danger of overdose to children in particular and remind them to store these products safely, particularly as these drugs are sometimes in colorful or cartoon-like packaging. Clear warnings to parents or caregivers who possess such drugs will increase awareness and encourage them to store them in an out-of-sight, out-of-reach location to children.

The substitute language states that DCP shall consult with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to develop the documents concerning the safe storage and disposal of such drugs and the short statements for publication on consumer packaging no later than December 1, 2022. The substitute language inserts that by January 1, 2023, each pharmacy, retailer, and hybrid retailer shall post a sign in an apparent location on the This substitute

language indicates the actionable steps to take to limit child exposure, and to better educate caregivers to protect children from the harmful effects of drug overdose.

#### **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

Acting Child Advocate from the Office of the Child Advocate, Sarah Healy Eagan, strongly supports this bill, urging the committee to better incorporate language explicitly regarding the dangers of accidental ingestion or overdose for children. There is an emphasis on caregiver education about safe storage of cannabis, citing the wide range of serious medical consequences that are linked to the accidental ingestion and exposure of THC in children.

Commissioner of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection, Michelle Seagull, supports the intent of the bill but articulates that the DCP will need additional resources to enforce the provisions that mandate retailers, hybrid retailers and pharmacists to provide consumers with the required information. The DCP also explains that since there is already such a significant amount of information required on materials included with prescriptions, the new information will likely be lost among the other required disclosures. DCP has no opposition to requiring signage on the premises of pharmacies, retailers, and hybrid retailers.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

Pediatrician from Hartford, Connecticut, Dr. Joseph B. Gallagher, supports the bill because it contains the necessary next steps for ensuring a decrease in the amount of marijuana overdoses in the pediatric population.

Representative of the Connecticut General Assembly, Anthony Nolan, supports the bill because by ensuring that the packaging isn't attractive to children, the harm to children will be significantly decreased. Information to caregivers will directly help in preventing children from experiencing the dangerous symptoms of overdose.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

CEO of Connecticut Pharmacist's Association, Nathan Tinker, disagrees with this bill because it is conflating prescription drugs with adult-use cannabis products in a way that is confusing and potentially dangerous. Prescription drugs and cannabis are not equivalent from the perspective of safety and access, and this bill promotes a false equivalence between the two.

**Reported by: Molly Lukiwsky**

**Date: 3/22/22**