
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6718

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN PRESCRIPTION DRUGS, CANNABIS AND CANNABIS PRODUCTS.

SUMMARY

Beginning January 1, 2024, this bill requires pharmacies and cannabis dispensary facilities, retailers, hybrid retailers, and micro-cultivators to affix a fluorescent orange sticker or label with black ink that says “DANGER TO CHILDREN KEEP OUT OF REACH” on any container or packaging (1) in which an opioid drug or schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substance is sold or dispensed or (2) that contains cannabis or cannabis products.

The bill also requires the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP), by December 31, 2023, to (1) design and produce these stickers or labels and (2) distribute an amount it deems sufficient to each pharmacy, dispensary facility, retailer, hybrid retailer, and micro-cultivator.

By July 1, 2024, the bill requires DCP to develop and administer a social media public awareness campaign and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to develop a public awareness campaign, both concerning the (1) safe storage and disposal of prescription drugs, cannabis, cannabis products, and illegal drugs and (2) dangers they pose to children. The bill prohibits the departments from ending the campaigns before June 30, 2026.

The bill appropriates funds to DCP and DMHAS to carry out the bill’s labeling and public awareness campaign requirements (§§ 6-13).

Lastly, the bill requires DCP-licensed cannabis dispensaries to post a sign in a conspicuous place on their premises notifying consumers that they may visit DCP’s website for information on safe storage and

disposal of cannabis and cannabis products, as is required under existing law for pharmacies, cannabis retailers, and hybrid retailers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the funding provisions are effective July 1, 2023.

DCP SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The bill requires DCP to develop and administer the social media public awareness campaign in consultation with the departments of Public Health and Children and Families.

Under the bill, “social media” is any electronic medium where users may create and view user-generated content, such as videos or still photographs, blogs, video blogs, podcasts, or instant messages.

Funding

For FY 24, the bill allocates to DCP:

1. \$400,000 each from the Opioid Settlement and the Prevention and Recovery Services funds for the costs to produce and distribute the stickers and labels,
2. \$200,000 from the General Fund to hire a full-time employee to investigate reported violations of the bill’s sticker and label requirements, and
3. \$50,000 from the General Fund to develop and administer the social media public awareness campaign.

For FY 25, the bill appropriates to DCP from the General Fund an additional (1) \$200,000 for hiring a full-time employee to investigate sticker and label violations and (2) \$50,000 to develop and administer the social media public awareness campaign.

DMHAS PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The bill requires DMHAS, by July 1, 2024, to develop and administer the public awareness campaign about safe storage and disposal of drugs, cannabis, and cannabis products in collaboration with providers of substance use disorder treatment services and organizations serving

homeless individuals.

The campaign must include state-wide delivery of information to individuals (1) receiving substance use disorder treatment and (2) experiencing homelessness.

Funding

In both FYs 24 and 25, the bill appropriates \$150,000 to DMHAS from the General Fund to develop and administer the public awareness campaign.

BACKGROUND

Related Bills

HB 6696, favorably reported by the General Law Committee, requires pharmacists to give patients, when dispensing an opioid drug to them, a free personal opioid drug deactivation and disposal product and allows them to seek reimbursement from the Opioid Settlement Fund for the cost of doing so.

sHB 6698, favorably reported by the General Law Committee, (1) expands the pilot peer navigator program for individuals with opioid use disorder, making it a statewide initiative, and (2) explicitly authorizes the Opioid Settlement Fund to be used to pay for administering the program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 2 (03/02/2023)