

Testimony 3/9/23
Senate Bill #516

Good afternoon committee members. My name is Spencer Lawrence. I would like to thank the committee for taking my testimony on SB516.

I am the Co-owner of TrueNorth Naturals, a hemp retail business. We sell consumer-ready hemp products online and in-person. Previously, we owned and operated an industrial hemp farm on which we cultivated hemp in 2020 and 2021.

I am here to discuss the fact that language in this bill will significantly restrict the types of hemp-derived products that one can produce and sell in Maryland. I commend the legislature's effort to restrict products that it perceives as intoxicating.

While we support the decision to include restrictions to the sale and distribution of chemically manufactured cannabinoids like delta (8) THC, we are in staunch opposition to the adoption of the THC limits to naturally-occurring hemp-derived products detailed in Section 36-1103, Page 69, Line 23-29. These limits are in clear contradiction to the Federal standards as outlined in the 2018 Farm Bill and do not take into account the credible pharmacological studies showing that CBD reduces both the potency and efficacy of THC. Our products have provided relief from anxiety to pain and helped improve sleep for many of our customers with no intoxicating side effects. Further, it would require our hemp business, that currently operates under Federal law, to register and submit to the regulations of an industry that operates outside of Federal law. That doesn't make sense to us.

The passage of this Bill as it now reads will place our local hemp farms, producers and retailers at a significant disadvantage in the market and in our opinion is a direct attack of the MD Right to Farm statute. I would like to provide a potential solution to the proposed restrictions by suggesting a change in the language to raise the limits to reflect the Federal THC threshold of 3mg THC per hemp-derived CBD per serving and 90mg per package. As a compromise, restrictions on the use of the marketing term "Hemp-derived THC" could be adopted.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposed amendments, and we look forward to your support of the industrial hemp industry in Maryland.

Our position is in support of the Bill with an amendment.

Regards,
Spencer Lawrence
Co-Founder & CEO
TrueNorth Naturals

SENATE BILL 516 Section 36-1103
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23 (A) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT SELL OR DISTRIBUTE A PRODUCT INTENDED
24 FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION OR INHALATION THAT CONTAINS MORE THAN 0.5
25 MILLIGRAMS OF TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL PER SERVING OR 2.5 MILLIGRAMS OF

26 TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL PER PACKAGE UNLESS THE PERSON IS LICENSED UNDER
27 § 36-401 OF THIS TITLE AND THE PRODUCT COMPLIES WITH THE:
28 (I) MANUFACTURING STANDARDS ESTABLISHED UNDER §
29 36-203 OF THIS TITLE;