



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Democrats vote to designate cannabis as farm crop

SB 1598 lowers land use barriers for those serving medical and OLCC markets

SALEM – The Oregon Senate Democrats voted today to lower some land use barriers for cannabis growers looking to serve markets under the Oregon Health Authority-administered licensing program.

Senate Bill 1598 – which passed by a 20-8 vote – removes requirements to obtain land-use compatibility statement imposed upon Oregon Liquor Control Commission license applicants when at least one person in the operation is responsible for a grow registered with the Oregon Health Authority prior to Jan. 1, 2015. The bill applies only for grows outside city limits with a canopy of 1,250 square feet indoors or 5,000 square feet outdoors, or less.

“This bill removes some land use limits for small-scale marijuana production outside of city limits,” said Sen. Ginny Burdick (D-Portland), the bill’s sponsor. “This law also clarifies that marijuana is a crop for farming, while allowing some flexibility to regulate it. This bill was negotiated with the Association of Oregon Counties and the Oregon Farm Bureau and I think it strikes a good balance.”

The bill deems cannabis grown for OLCC-licensed sales a farm crop, but those farmers won’t enjoy the same “right to farm” privileges as they would for other crops. Cannabis farms will have additional oversight regarding zoning, farming practices, neighborhood and community impacts and other aspects.

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