



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

State Capitol
Oregon State Legislature

PRESS RELEASE

February 17, 2022

CONTACT: Stephen Watson

Stephen.watson@oregonlegislature.gov

Southern Oregon Legislators Lead on Illegal Cannabis Enforcement

Senate Bill 1564 Provides Local Solutions, Support for Law Enforcement

SALEM – Today, the Senate approved Senate Bill 1564 on a vote of 23 to 1. This bill authorizes the Oregon Department of Agriculture to impose a temporary moratorium on hemp grower licenses if a county commission declares a cannabis related state of emergency.

“Overproduction of hemp can cause critical difficulties for law enforcement in rural areas,” said Senator Jeff Golden (D-Ashland), Chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery, who carried Senate Bill 1564. “At face value, hemp is nearly indistinguishable from THC cannabis crops. Law enforcement asked us to temporarily pause the spread of hemp acreage to improve their ability to deal with bad actors. Because conditions vary across the state, this bill gives local government the key role of making the call.”

“A temporary timeout gives us the chance to review and confirm or amend regulations around hemp production,” said Representative Pam Marsh (D-Jackson County), Chair of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Co-Chief Sponsor of Senate Bill 1564. “We must make sure that we are supporting legal hemp growers without emboldening the illegal industry.”

Senate Bill 1564 authorizes a county board of commissioners that has declared a state of emergency related to cannabis to notify the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) of the declaration and request that ODA impose a moratorium of hemp grower licenses in the county. This process would be in effect for the 2022 and 2023 growing seasons. The measure would also rename the Task Force on Cannabis-Derived Intoxicants as the Task Force on Cannabis-Derived Intoxicants and Illegal Cannabis Production, increase the task force membership, and expand its scope of work.

Senate Bill 1564 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

###