

Addendum 1

02-11-2016

This addendum is in reference to HB722, the "Haleigh's Hope Act" Part II

The following comments are based on a reading of the most current version of this bill. (LC 37 2049)

- Only allows for the possession of 20 ounces or less of low THC oil if you have a card and it is in a properly labeled container.
- Does not allow for any form of marijuana that can be smoked. It only allows for liquid, pills or oil.
- Anyone who manufactures, distributes, dispenses, sells, or possesses with the intent to distribute low THC oil shall be guilty of a felony. The penalties increase with differing amounts of possession. There are mandatory minimum sentences for these felonies.
- Any employee of a manufacturer who manufactures medical cannabis, or any employee or agent of a manufacturer who distributes, dispenses, sells, or possesses with the intent to distribute cannabis devices or medical cannabis shall be guilty of a felony. There is a mandatory minimum sentence here as well.
- A licensed manufacturer shall not employ a person under the age of 21 or who has a disqualifying felony.

Pro Law Enforcement Concerns:

- 23 states already have approved medical marijuana legislation.
- There is nothing in this proposed legislation to try to legalize marijuana for recreational purposes.
- No form of marijuana that can be smoked is legal under this legislation.
- Very similar to Minnesota's law which is considered to be the strictest in the nation.
- Added new penalties for possession of large amounts of oil and for manufacturer employees who distribute, etc.
- Added age and criminal history check requirements for dispensary employees.
- Gives law enforcement the ability to verify that a person with a registry card or in possession of medical cannabis is registered.
- Will only allow 2 to 6 manufacturers.

Negative Law Enforcement Concerns:

- Violates federal law in reference to marijuana.
- Is opposed by the GBI.
- The Georgia Commission on Medical Cannabis rejected the idea of growing marijuana in Georgia.
- The new Georgia Medical Cannabis Task Force will only have 3 sworn law enforcement members among its 20 members. They will be one Chief, one Sheriff and the Director of the GBI.
- Governor Deal has stated opposition to this legislation.