

Newsom's Hemp Ban Proposal Sparks Outrage Among Users

Newsom's Proposed Ban on Intoxicating Hemp Products Sparks Backlash

California Governor Gavin Newsom's recent proposal to ban intoxicating hemp products has ignited significant controversy, particularly from the hemp industry and health experts who argue the measures may be too extreme. The proposed emergency regulations aim to eliminate any consumable items containing detectable levels of THC, marking one of the strictest stances on hemp in the U.S.

The Push for Stricter Regulations

Newsom announced the regulations last week, citing a need to protect children from the potential dangers of intoxicating hemp products, which he claims are often available in grocery stores near schools. "There's full responsibility for not policing itself for the proliferation of these intoxicating products that are hurting our children," he stated.

The hemp sector has operated with minimal oversight [since the 2018 Farm Bill](#), which effectively removed hemp from the Drug Enforcement Administration's jurisdiction, allowing for widespread distribution of unregulated products. This has raised concerns among health professionals regarding safety and quality.

Industry Response

The proposed ban has met with strong opposition from the hemp industry, which argues that the regulations do not effectively address legitimate health and safety concerns. Jonathan Miller, general counsel for the U.S. Hemp Roundtable, criticized Newsom's approach, claiming it amounts to outright prohibition rather than targeted regulation. "There are pathways that accomplish what he is most angry about without destroying the industry," Miller argued, advocating for better enforcement of existing laws instead.

The Need for Balance

While some agree on the necessity for regulation, others caution against a total ban. Peter Grinspoon, a cannabis specialist at Massachusetts General Hospital, noted that while regulation is critical, an outright ban could drive the market underground, resulting in more dangerous products. "It just results in people — the whole trade, billion-dollar industry — going underground and becoming all the more dangerous," he explained.

The Legislative Landscape

California's efforts to regulate hemp have been hampered by legislative setbacks. A recent bill aimed at restricting certain industrial hemp products failed to pass the State Senate, despite gaining support from the

Assembly. The proposed regulations would have established stricter testing and labeling requirements but ultimately fell short of becoming law.

Other states, like Kentucky and Colorado, have already implemented more robust regulations on hemp products, including age restrictions and manufacturing requirements. These states have limited the sale of intoxicating hemp products to individuals aged 21 and older, setting a precedent for California to follow.

Advocates for Change

Advocates for reform, including some within the cannabis industry, support Newsom's call for regulation but urge a more balanced approach. Vince Ning, co-founder of cannabis distribution platform Nabis, emphasized the need for a regulatory framework that ensures safe access to hemp products while protecting consumers.

Dustin Moore, co-founder of Embarc cannabis shops, echoed these sentiments, highlighting the risks associated with an unregulated market. "If the existing framework is not sustainable, we must come together to modify it," he stated.

The Path Forward

As discussions continue, the tension between regulation and prohibition remains a focal point. Stakeholders on both sides of the debate recognize the need for effective oversight but disagree on the methods to achieve it. With Newsom's emergency regulations on the horizon, the future of California's hemp market hangs in the balance, prompting a critical examination of how to best protect consumers while fostering a responsible industry.

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