

Arizona Hemp Trade Group Reacts to Court TRO Denial

Chandler-Based HITA Continues Legal Fight to Protect Sales of Hemp-Derived THC Products in Unlicensed Stores Across Arizona

CHANDLER, Ariz. – In a significant development for Arizona’s hemp industry, the Maricopa County Superior Court has denied the Hemp Industry Trade Association of Arizona’s (HITA) motion for a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the Arizona Attorney General’s March 24 directive. The state’s order bans the sale of hemp-derived THC products in unlicensed establishments, prompting HITA to take legal action on behalf of its members and industry stakeholders.

The denial of the TRO, while disappointing to many within Arizona’s hemp sector, does not mark the end of the association’s legal challenge. Instead, HITA views the ruling as a procedural milestone that sets the stage for a more comprehensive and decisive hearing scheduled for May 9, 2025. The court’s decision to expedite the preliminary injunction hearing offers HITA a critical opportunity to present full evidence and argumentation in defense of hemp-derived THC product access and legality.

Understanding the Core Legal Dispute: HITA Challenges Ban on Federally Legal Hemp-Derived Products in Arizona

The legal friction stems from a March 24, 2025, letter issued by the Arizona Attorney General’s office. In it, the attorney general declared that it is illegal for any business to sell products infused with hemp-derived THC unless they possess a valid marijuana establishment license issued under Arizona’s adult-use cannabis regulatory framework.

HITA, representing a broad coalition of retailers, processors, and advocates within Arizona’s hemp sector, contends that this mandate overreaches state authority. The association argues that many hemp-derived products—especially those containing federally legal cannabinoids such as Delta-8 THC and other minor compounds—fall under the protections of the 2018 Farm Bill and should not be lumped into the state’s marijuana regulatory scheme.

By filing its lawsuit and seeking injunctive relief, HITA aims to prevent the implementation of what it views as a prohibitionist stance that harms small businesses, restricts consumer access, and threatens the viability of Arizona’s growing hemp economy.

HITA Reaffirms Its Commitment to Lawful Conduct and Consumer Safety Amid Regulatory Uncertainty

Despite the legal setback, HITA has made it clear that its members are committed to full legal compliance and responsible business practices. The organization is urging all operators and employees within the hemp

industry to strictly follow state laws and to engage respectfully with law enforcement during any regulatory inspections or enforcement actions.

At the same time, HITA encourages business owners and staff to remain aware of their rights, including due process protections. The association has issued guidance on best practices, including maintaining up-to-date documentation, retaining third-party test results, and consulting with legal counsel when questions arise.

These efforts reflect HITA's broader mission of ensuring that the Arizona hemp industry remains a professional, regulated, and resilient part of the state's economy. The association has long advocated for science-based regulatory frameworks that distinguish between marijuana and industrial hemp products, which are non-psychoactive or fall within federally permitted THC thresholds.

The May 9 Preliminary Injunction Hearing Will Be a Pivotal Moment for Arizona's Hemp Sector

The upcoming preliminary injunction hearing on May 9, 2025, will serve as the critical next step in determining whether the state's directive will be paused while the legal merits of the case are fully litigated. If the court grants the injunction, hemp-derived THC product sales may continue in unlicensed stores under certain conditions, pending final resolution.

HITA's legal team is currently preparing detailed briefs, compiling evidence, and mobilizing expert testimony to demonstrate that hemp-derived products are both federally legal and vital to Arizona's economic and health landscape. They also intend to argue that banning these products undermines state tax revenues and consumer freedom, while simultaneously endangering thousands of jobs.

The fast-track schedule set by the court acknowledges the urgency of the matter, given that the attorney general's letter has already disrupted supply chains and forced some businesses to halt sales of key product lines.

Arizona's Hemp Industry Faces Economic Consequences as Legal Uncertainty Impacts Jobs and Access

Beyond legal arguments, the case highlights broader economic and social consequences for Arizona's hemp industry. Many of HITA's members produce and distribute hemp-derived products that serve as affordable wellness alternatives for a wide range of consumers, including veterans managing PTSD, seniors dealing with insomnia, and working adults seeking relief from daily stress.

Hemp products—ranging from tinctures and gummies to topicals and soft gels—are a cornerstone for small businesses and independent retailers. Restricting access through overregulation not only diminishes consumer choice but also curtails the tax revenues generated from lawful commerce in these products.

Moreover, the industry provides substantial employment across the state, supporting jobs in farming, processing, compliance, sales, and research. HITA estimates that the restrictions could jeopardize thousands of direct and indirect jobs and reduce the positive economic impact that hemp has brought to both rural and urban communities in Arizona.

A Call for Regulatory Balance: HITA Advocates for Science-Based Policy, Not Prohibition

HITA's position is clear: the future of hemp in Arizona lies in thoughtful regulation, not in the broad-stroke enforcement actions that threaten to stifle innovation and access. The association supports appropriate

oversight to ensure consumer safety and product quality, but argues that regulations should reflect the chemical distinctions between hemp and marijuana, not merely their perceived similarities.

This is particularly relevant as the national conversation around cannabinoids like Delta-8 THC continues to evolve. Some states have adopted tailored regulatory models that require safety testing and age restrictions without banning products outright—an approach that HITA believes Arizona should emulate.

By staying engaged with policymakers, regulators, and the public, HITA intends to demonstrate that the hemp industry is willing and able to operate within a responsible and transparent legal framework—so long as that framework does not impose unreasonable burdens or stifle lawful enterprise.

HITA Urges Industry Stakeholders to Stay Informed, Compliant, and United Ahead of the Next Legal Phase

As the legal case advances toward the May 9 hearing, HITA is encouraging its members to remain active, informed, and supportive. The association plans to continue issuing regular updates, offer legal guidance, and organize opportunities for stakeholders to share their voices, data, and experiences in support of the cause.

The organization remains confident that a fair and complete hearing will result in the recognition of hemp's legality and its role in supporting public health and economic development. For now, HITA's message to Arizona's hemp operators is simple: stay compliant, stay resilient, and stay united.

Legal Certainty for Arizona's Hemp Industry Hinges on the May 9 Court Hearing

The Maricopa County Superior Court's decision to deny a temporary restraining order may have delayed immediate relief for Arizona's hemp retailers, but it has also set the wheels in motion for a crucial legal reckoning on May 9. With livelihoods, consumer access, and industry stability hanging in the balance, HITA continues to press forward in defense of lawful hemp commerce and the communities it serves.

As the legal process unfolds, the broader hemp industry across the U.S. will be watching Arizona's next steps closely—because the outcome here could shape the regulatory landscape for hemp-derived cannabinoids nationwide.

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +415-226-4060

© Copyright 2025 Cannabis Risk Manager. All Rights Reserved