

Roger Stone Claims Trump Was Pressured by GOP Into Hemp Ban

Roger Stone Claims Trump Was “Forced” by GOP Lawmakers to Sign Hemp Ban Into Law, Raising Concerns About Future of Legal Hemp Industry

GOP political operative and longtime Trump ally Roger Stone says President Donald Trump was effectively compelled by Republican lawmakers to approve a must-pass spending bill that includes a sweeping ban on hemp products containing THC. The revelation has sparked debate over the administration’s role in the federal hemp industry and raised questions about regulatory oversight for hemp-derived cannabinoids.

Trump’s Past Role in Hemp Legalization Contrasts With Current Hemp Ban Controversy

Stone praised Trump as “the founder of the modern legal hemp industry in America,” referencing the president’s signing of the 2018 Farm Bill, which federally legalized hemp and its derivatives. However, Stone noted that Trump did not personally advocate for hemp legalization during congressional debates in 2018 and did not take credit for creating the industry at the bill’s signing ceremony.

Complicating Stone’s claim of coercion, a White House spokesperson previously indicated that Trump specifically supported the prohibition language in the latest spending bill, raising questions about whether the president truly signed it under duress. Stone, however, pointed to a Truth Social post by Trump highlighting hemp-derived CBD’s therapeutic benefits as evidence of his personal support for hemp products, saying, “I kind of think the video he posted speaks for itself.”

Stone also emphasized the importance of the 2018 Farm Bill for the industry, calling it “among his greatest accomplishments.”

Federal Hemp Ban Takes Effect in Late 2026, Leaving Stakeholders Time to Negotiate

The new hemp prohibition will not go into effect until late 2026, giving industry stakeholders a window to advocate for regulatory compromises that could protect consumable cannabinoid products. Stone expressed concern that the legislation, as currently written, could “do away with the domestic hemp industry, which created thousands of jobs and some additionally beneficial products for people.”

Stone Calls for Regulatory Framework Instead of Blanket Prohibition

Stone criticized Congress for using the spending bill to implement a “sweeping” prohibition, describing it as “prohibition by the back door” rather than responsible regulation. He argued that federal lawmakers missed an opportunity to create a framework that could remove synthetic cannabinoids and other unsafe products

from the market while preserving legitimate hemp businesses.

“This is not regulation,” Stone said. “It’s prohibition by the back door.”

Stone’s commentary echoes broader concerns in the hemp industry, including warnings from Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, who said hemp is an important part of the state economy, and advocacy groups emphasizing the need for federal regulation rather than outright bans.

Lawmakers Had Attempted, But Failed, to Block Hemp Ban in Congress

Prior to the spending bill’s passage, GOP lawmakers in both the House and Senate proposed amendments to strike the hemp prohibition language. Senators Rand Paul (R-KY) and Thomas Massie (R-KY) both introduced measures to prevent the ban, with Paul joining 22 Democrats and anti-marijuana Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) in voting against tabling the amendment. However, the majority ultimately quashed the efforts, and Massie’s House amendment also failed to gain traction.

Stone emphasized that these legislative defeats highlight how the ban was included as part of a must-pass funding measure, leaving little room for debate or compromise.

Hemp Ban Expands Definition of Legal Hemp and Restricts Consumer Products

Since the 2018 Farm Bill, hemp products were legal if they contained less than 0.3% delta-9 THC by dry weight. The new legislation broadens this definition, requiring that total THC—including delta-8 and other isomers—cannot exceed 0.4 milligrams per container, effectively banning nearly all consumable hemp products currently on the market.

The law also prohibits cannabinoids synthesized outside of the cannabis plant or not naturally producible by the plant, along with intermediate hemp-derived cannabinoid products sold directly to consumers. Within 90 days, the FDA and other agencies must publish a list of naturally occurring cannabinoids and those with effects similar to THC.

Concerns Over Medical Research and Veteran Access to Cannabis

Industry advocates and veterans’ groups are warning that the blanket prohibition could hinder critical research and limit therapeutic options. Congressional leaders face calls to create an alternative regulatory pathway for consumable hemp products to prevent the industry’s near-total collapse.

Lawmakers such as Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) have suggested that the year-long window before the ban takes effect could allow for legislation to establish a responsible regulatory framework for hemp-derived products.

The spending bill also notably omits previously approved bipartisan provisions allowing U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs doctors to recommend medical cannabis to patients in states where it is legal, despite Senate and House support earlier in 2025.

Hemp Stakeholders Hope for Compromise Before Ban Implementation

While the federal ban looms, industry leaders remain cautiously optimistic that Congress may act to preserve legal, consumable hemp products. Stone, along with other advocates, is calling for a regulatory framework that eliminates unsafe synthetic cannabinoids while maintaining access to beneficial hemp-derived products for consumers.

The coming year will be critical for hemp operators, state regulators, and federal lawmakers as they navigate a rapidly evolving legal landscape, balancing public safety concerns with the economic and therapeutic potential of the hemp industry.

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