

New Cannabis Bills Moving Forward

FOUR NEW LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AIM TO CORRECT FOR UNEVEN REGULATIONS AND TAXES

In an effort to correct some of the unintended consequences of Proposition 64 and legal adult-use cannabis regulations, four new bills are making their way through the California legislature.

SENATE BILL 34

Senate Bill 34, introduced by Senator Scott Wiener, allows cannabis businesses to donate cannabis to medicinal patients for compassionate use, without paying excise taxes on the donation. “We don’t tax prescription drugs. Why should we tax medical cannabis?” said Wiener on KQED last November.

Known as the Dennis Peron and Brownie Mary Act, the bill pays homage to two San Franciscans. Mary Jane Rathbun was a hospital volunteer who distributed cannabis brownies to AIDS patients. Dennis Peron co-founded the San Francisco Cannabis Buyers Club, and co-wrote Proposition 215, The Compassionate Use Act of California.

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STATE SENATOR SCOTT WIENER
DEMOCRAT, SAN FRANCISCO

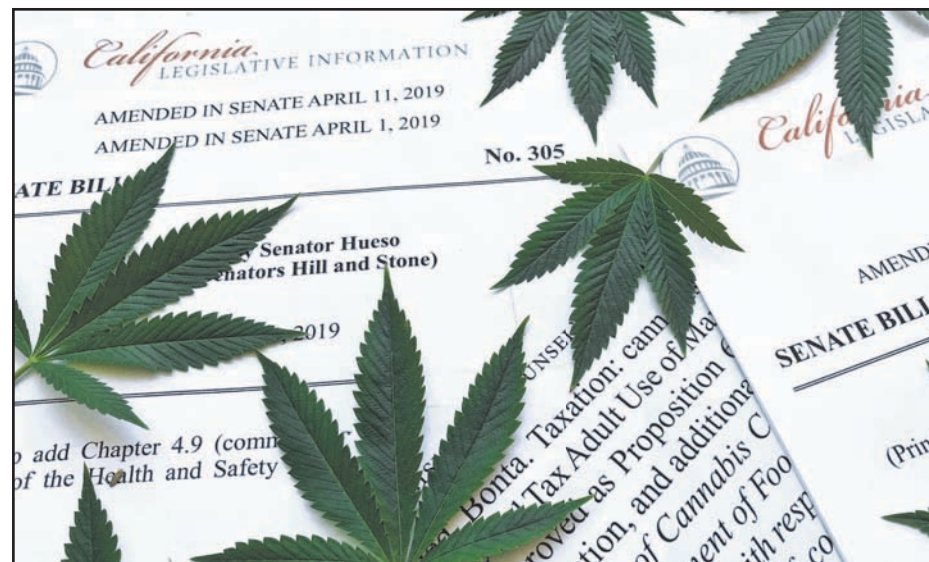
SENATE BILL 51

One of the cannabis industry’s biggest problems is that it operates on a cash-only basis, creating opportunities for corruption and robberies. This inability to conduct basic banking services motivated Senate Majority Leader Robert Hertzberg to introduce SB51, which authorizes limited charter banks and credit unions for cannabis businesses. “We can’t stand by while the safety of legal business owners, their employees and the general public are put at risk,” said Hertzberg in a press release on his website.

The bill would allow these banks to issue “special purpose checks,” allowing businesses to pay suppliers, employees and taxes without the need for bags of cash and armored transports. Designed as a temporary solution, SB 51 would become non-operative should the federal government legalize cannabis and authorize regular banking services for cannabis businesses.

SENATE BILL 305

Introduced by Senator Benjamin Hueso from San Diego, SB 305 allows terminally ill patients to use medical cannabis within certain specified health care facilities.



NEW SENATE AND ASSEMBLY BILLS AIM TO LOWER TAXES AND OPEN GREATER ACCESS TO USE.

In its endorsement letter, the Cannabis Nurses Network said, “As nurses, we have witnessed significant benefits that cannabis therapeutics provide our patients, particularly with respect to pain management for patients with cancer and other debilitating or terminal medical conditions.”

ASSEMBLY BILL 1465

Assembly Bill 1465 creates an entirely new license, permitting people to purchase and use cannabis products at a “licensed consumption cafe/lounge.” Currently, there is no public place where such cannabis smoking is allowed.

“Hospitality-based businesses have different business models than cannabis retail businesses,” said the bill’s author, West Los Angeles Assemblymember Richard Bloom, in a statement. The bill allows for separate lounge rooms, in the image of San Francisco’s cannabis dispensaries.



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