

S.22

An act relating to increased penalties for possession, sale, and dispensation of fentanyl

The Senate concurs in the House proposal of amendment with the following proposal of amendment thereto:

By striking out Secs. 1 and 2 in their entirety and inserting in lieu thereof four new sections to be Secs. 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b to read as follows:

Sec. 1a. 18 V.S.A. § 4233a is added to read:

§ 4233a. FENTANYL

(a) Selling or dispensing.

(1) A person knowingly and unlawfully dispensing fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than three years or fined not more than \$75,000.00, or both. A person knowingly and unlawfully selling fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than \$100,000.00, or both.

(2) A person knowingly and unlawfully selling or dispensing fentanyl in an amount consisting of four milligrams or more of one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures, or substances containing fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years or fined not more than \$250,000.00, or both.

(3) A person knowingly and unlawfully selling or dispensing fentanyl in an amount consisting of 20 milligrams or more of one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures, or substances containing fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than 20 years or fined not more than \$1,000,000.00, or both.

(4) In lieu of a charge under this subsection, but in addition to any other penalties provided by law, a person knowingly and unlawfully selling or dispensing any regulated drug containing a detectable amount of fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than \$250,000.00, or both.

(b) Trafficking. A person knowingly and unlawfully possessing fentanyl in an amount consisting of 70 milligrams or more of one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures, or substances containing fentanyl with the intent to sell or dispense the fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than 30 years or fined not more than \$1,000,000.00, or both. There shall be a permissive inference that a person who possesses fentanyl in an amount of 70 milligrams or more of one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures, or substances containing fentanyl intends to sell or dispense the fentanyl. The amount of possessed fentanyl under this subsection to sustain a charge of conspiracy under 13 V.S.A. § 1404 shall be not less than 70 milligrams in the aggregate.

(c) Transportation into the State. In addition to any other penalties provided by law, a person knowingly and unlawfully transporting more than 20 milligrams of fentanyl into Vermont with the intent to sell or dispense the fentanyl shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years or fined not more than \$100,000.00, or both.

Sec. 1b. 18 V.S.A. § 4234 is amended to read:

§ 4234. DEPRESSANT, STIMULANT, AND NARCOTIC DRUGS

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(b) Selling or dispensing.

(1) A person knowingly and unlawfully dispensing a depressant, stimulant, or narcotic drug, other than fentanyl, heroin, or cocaine, shall be imprisoned not more than three years or fined not more than \$75,000.00, or both. A person knowingly and unlawfully selling a depressant, stimulant, or narcotic drug, other than fentanyl, cocaine, or heroin, shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than \$25,000.00, or both.

(2) A person knowingly and unlawfully selling or dispensing a depressant, stimulant, or narcotic drug, other than fentanyl, heroin, or cocaine, consisting of 100 times a benchmark unlawful dosage or its equivalent as determined by the ~~board of health~~ Board of Health by rule shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years or fined not more than \$100,000.00, or both.

(3) A person knowingly and unlawfully selling or dispensing a depressant, stimulant, or narcotic drug, other than fentanyl, heroin, or cocaine, consisting of 1,000 times a benchmark unlawful dosage or its equivalent as determined by the ~~board of health~~ Board of Health by rule shall be imprisoned not more than 20 years or fined not more than \$500,000.00, or both.

Sec. 2a. 13 V.S.A. § 1404 is amended to read:

§ 1404. CONSPIRACY

(a) A person is guilty of conspiracy if, with the purpose that an offense listed in subsection (c) of this section be committed, that person agrees with one or more persons to commit or cause the commission of that offense, and at least two of the co-conspirators are persons who are neither law enforcement officials acting in official capacity nor persons acting in cooperation with a law enforcement official.

(b) No person shall be convicted of conspiracy unless a substantial overt act in furtherance of the conspiracy is alleged and proved to have been done by the defendant or by a co-conspirator, other than a law enforcement official acting in an official capacity or a person acting in cooperation with a law enforcement official, and subsequent to the defendant's entrance into the conspiracy. Speech alone may not constitute an overt act.

(c) This section applies only to a conspiracy to commit or cause the commission of one or more of the following offenses:

- (1) murder in the first or second degree;
- (2) arson under sections 501-504 and 506 of this title;
- (3) sexual exploitation of children under sections 2822, 2823, and 2824 of this title;
- (4) receiving stolen property under sections 2561-2564 of this title; or

(5) an offense involving the sale, delivery, manufacture, or cultivation of a regulated drug or an offense under:

(A) 18 V.S.A. § 4230(c), relating to trafficking in marijuana;

(B) 18 V.S.A. § 4231(c), relating to trafficking in cocaine;

(C) 18 V.S.A. § 4233(c), relating to trafficking in heroin;

(D) 18 V.S.A. § 4234(b)(3), relating to unlawful selling or dispensing of a depressant, stimulant, or narcotic drug, other than heroin or cocaine; ~~or~~

(E) 18 V.S.A. § 4234a(c), relating to trafficking in methamphetamine; or

(F) 18 V.S.A. § 4233a(c), relating to trafficking in fentanyl.

Sec. 2b. USE OF U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-

APPROVED DRUGS CONTAINING CANNABIDIOL

(a) Upon approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of one or more prescription drugs containing cannabidiol, the following activities shall be lawful in Vermont:

(1) the clinically appropriate prescription for a patient of an FDA-approved prescription drug containing cannabidiol by a health care provider licensed to prescribe medications in this State and acting within his or her authorized scope of practice;

(2) the dispensing, pursuant to a valid prescription, of an FDA-approved prescription drug containing cannabidiol to a patient or a patient's authorized

representative by a pharmacist or by another health care provider licensed to dispense medications in this State and acting within his or her authorized scope of practice;

(3) the possession and transportation of an FDA-approved prescription drug containing cannabidiol by a patient to whom a valid prescription was issued or by the patient's authorized representative;

(4) the possession and transportation of an FDA-approved prescription drug containing cannabidiol by a licensed pharmacy or wholesaler in order to facilitate the appropriate dispensing and use of the drug; and

(5) the use of an FDA-approved prescription drug containing cannabidiol by a patient to whom a valid prescription was issued, provided the patient uses the drug only for legitimate medical purposes in conformity with instructions from the prescriber and dispenser.

(b) Upon approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration of one or more prescription drugs containing cannabidiol, the Department of Health shall amend its rules to conform to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.