



CONNECTICUT SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL

The 2025 Council Market Outlook Working Group

Cannabis Marketplace Subcommittee - First Working Session

Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 10:00 am via Zoom

Marketplace Cannabis Chair:

Nikole Burns (Marketplace - Cannabis) **CT Cannabis Chamber of Commerce**

NOTES:

Overall focus of this meeting was specifically on “challenges faced by the cannabis market in this state, and any opportunities available to promote or incentive progress within such market”.

Financial constraints on our businesses are hurting them broadly, multiple businesses have had to close their doors, and marketing on producers can be limiting for brand recognition. Workforce development has challenges, hiring new staff is hard in a hybrid retail facility due to high personnel costs for pharmacists. Cannabis Establishments are looking for small concessions with marketing, slightly more colors, but not an overcorrection which creates products that are appealing to children. Additionally, responsible cannabis use should be emphasized, and ways to differentiate the regulated market vs the unregulated market could become an informational campaign. Sharing the difference between a legitimately licensed Cannabis Establishment, and an unregulated “Smoke Shop” helps consumers and municipal residents to know what is safe.

High taxation on recreational products and limited product type is eroding the medical market. There are overall less medical products due to consumers only purchasing what is available in CT or going over state lines to get their preferred products. Parity between the adult-use and medical market could be a solution and ensure medical patients can continue to get the products they need.

Strengthening SEC fiscal programs would help SEEs due to lack of available funds for Cannabis Establishments broadly.

Massachusetts had similar issues in the beginning of their market before it was able to grow, CT is following that trajectory and dealing with similar growing pains. This indicates that CT’s market is around where it should be compared to states that have a more established industry.