

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2453

BY DELEGATES ELDRIDGE, BUTLER AND SUMMERS

[Introduced February 15, 2017; Referred
to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural
Resources then the Judiciary.]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §19-12E-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to expanding the list of persons the Commissioner of Agriculture may license to grow or
3 cultivate industrial hemp.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §19-12E-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and
2 reenacted to read as follows:

ARTICLE 12E. INDUSTRIAL HEMP DEVELOPMENT ACT.

§19-12E-5. Industrial hemp - licensing.

1 (a) A person growing industrial hemp for commercial purposes shall apply to the
2 commissioner for license on a form prescribed by the commissioner.

3 (b) The application for a license must include the name and address of the applicant and
4 the legal description of the land area to be used for the production of industrial hemp.

5 (c) The commissioner shall require each first-time applicant for a license to file a set of the
6 applicant's fingerprints, taken by a law-enforcement officer, and any other information necessary
7 to complete a statewide and nationwide criminal history check with the criminal investigation
8 bureau of the department of justice for state processing and with the Federal Bureau of
9 Investigation for federal processing. All of the costs associated with the criminal history check
10 are the responsibility of the applicant. Criminal history records provided to the department under
11 this section are confidential. The commissioner may use the records only to determine if an
12 applicant is eligible to receive a license for the production of industrial hemp.

13 (d) If the applicant has completed the application process to the satisfaction of the
14 commissioner, the commissioner shall issue the license which is valid until December 31, of the
15 year of application. An individual licensed under this section is presumed to be growing industrial
16 hemp for commercial purposes.

17 (e) Notwithstanding any provision of this article, rule or the provisions of chapter sixty-a of

18 this code to the contrary, ~~only~~ in addition to other persons qualified under this article to be
19 licensed, the commissioner may authorize the Department of Agriculture, and state institutions of
20 higher learning ~~licensed and authorized by the commissioner to do so may~~ to lawfully grow or
21 cultivate industrial hemp in this state.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to expand the list of persons the Commissioner of Agriculture may license to grow or cultivate industrial hemp.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.