

STATE OF OHIO
Executive Department

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Columbus

VETO MESSAGE

**STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE VETO OF ITEMS IN
AMENDED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 56**

December 19, 2025

Pursuant to Article II, Section 16 of the Ohio Constitution, which states that the Governor may disapprove any items in a bill making an appropriation of money, I hereby disapprove the following items contained in Amended Substitute Senate Bill 56 and set forth below the reasons for so doing. The text I am disapproving is identified in this message by reference to the corresponding page and boxed text of the bill.

ITEM NUMBER 1

On page number 1, delete the boxed text, "4506.01,".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text beginning with "3779.21, 3779.211..." and ending with "...3779.30, 3779.99,".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text beginning with "and to repeal the versions..." and ending with "...December 31, 2026,".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text, "liquor control,".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text, "to amend section 4506.01 of the Revised Code".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text, "effective December 31, 2026,".

On page number 1, delete the boxed text, "4506.01,".

On page number 2, delete the boxed text beginning with, "3779.21, 3779.211..." and ending with "...3779.30, 3779.99,".

On page number 47, delete the boxed text beginning with "Sec. 3779.21. As used in..." and ending with "... under Chapter 4303. of the Revised Code.".

On page number 48, delete the boxed text.

On page number 49, delete the boxed text.

On page number 50, delete the boxed text.

On page number 51, delete the boxed text.

On page number 52, delete the boxed text.

On page number 53, delete the boxed text.

On page number 54, delete the boxed text beginning with, "person's possession an opened container..." and ending with, "...is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.".

On page number 92, delete the boxed text.

On page number 93, delete the boxed text.
On page number 94, delete the boxed text.
On page number 95, delete the boxed text.
On page number 96, delete the boxed text.
On page number 97, delete the boxed text beginning with, “(3) Pressing a single button...” and ending with, “...as in section 4511.01 of the Revised Code.”.
On page number 114, delete the boxed text beginning with “(O) The department of public safety...” and ending with, “...as provided in this chapter.”.
On page number 114, delete the boxed text, “3779.”.
On page number 114, delete the boxed text, “Chapter 3779. Of the Revised Code and the policies established under that chapter.”.
On page number 120, delete the boxed text, “4506.01.”.
On page number 120, delete the boxed text beginning with “Section 4. That sections...” and ending with, “...effective December 31, 2026.”.
On page number 121, delete the boxed text.
On page number 122, delete the boxed text.
On page number 123, delete the boxed text.
On page number 124, delete the boxed text.
On page number 125, delete the boxed text.
On page number 126, delete the boxed text beginning with, “(2) Inputting, selecting, or reading...” and ending with, “...take effect December 31, 2026.”.
On page number 128, delete the boxed text, “, as defined in section 3779.21 of the Revised”.
On page number 128, delete the boxed text, “Code.”.
On page number 128, delete the boxed text, “beyond December 31, 2026”.

Drinkable Cannabinoid Products:

On November 12th, Congress and President Trump enacted H.R. 5371 into law. Among the many provisions of this continuing resolution was a provision enacting a federal ban on intoxicating hemp, beginning in November 2026. This ban includes a ban on THC beverages containing intoxicating hemp.

Ohio is making good public policy by enacting its own intoxicating hemp ban earlier than federal law. However, a carve out to allow the further sale of intoxicating hemp beverages for most of 2026 will create confusion for consumers and a lack of conformity with federal law.

Further, purveyors of intoxicating hemp often market their products as an alcohol substitute, even claiming health benefits. The facts are that THC is not analogous to alcohol, is metabolized differently than alcohol, and does not intoxicate in the same way alcohol does. This can mislead consumers into thinking these products will have the same effect on them as alcohol, when there is no way to guarantee such claims, thus creating safety issues.

For these reasons, a partial veto is in the public interest.

ITEM NUMBER 2

On page number 58, delete the boxed text, “, which shall include, at minimum, any felony offense”.

Disqualifying Offenses

Senate Bill 56 also changes Ohio law regarding persons with felonies being disqualified from working in the marijuana industry. The Division of Cannabis Control has enacted and enforced restrictions on employment based on disqualifying offenses since the earliest days of the Medical Marijuana program in Ohio seven years ago. Issue 2 as passed by the voters adopted those same offenses into statute. The current rules already prevent people with felony drug offenses, felony theft offenses and other crimes which indicate that a person is not fit to work within a highly regulated industry from obtaining employment within cannabis businesses. This represented a balanced approach, identifying the types of offenses that should prevent a person from working in the cannabis industry, while recognizing that people have the ability to show rehabilitation which should not bar them from employment forever. I am concerned the new language may be overly broad and will cause workers who have worked in the marijuana industry for years to lose their jobs.

Therefore, a veto is in the public interest.

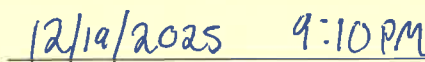


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of the State of Ohio to be affixed at Columbus this 19th day of December, Two Thousand Twenty-Five.


Mike DeWine, Governor

This will acknowledge the receipt of a copy of this veto Message of Amended Substitute Senate Bill 56 that was disapproved in part by Governor Mike DeWine on December 19, 2025.

 Senate message clerk
Name and Title of Officer


Date and Time of Receipt