

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence  
For HB 6

Compiled on: Tuesday, April 4, 2023 7:55 AM

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Hearing Date: March 28, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Shelly Akerly  
self  
Coppell, TX

I support HB 6 for the safety of our families, our law enforcement and our communities.

Michael weinstein  
Rebel Dreads Corp  
dallas, TX

Dealers that knowingly sell drugs to people and do not say that there is Fentanyl in that drug should receive max sentences for murder.

Billy Pierce  
Libertarian Party of Harris County  
Cypress, TX

Addiction can ruin lives. But, criminalizing substances and enforcing those laws with ever increasing violence doesn't fix the problem. The war on drugs is a failed idea, and it is far past time that we looked for other solutions to the problem.

LP Harris County opposes the War on Drugs. Consistent with the principles of self-ownership, consenting adults ought not be restricted from partaking in activities that harm no one else. This includes possession, consumption and/or market transactions of substances for medicinal, recreational, or other purposes.

Our party supports the repeal of all Vice and Morality based laws that are against consenting adults and that do no harm to others. The State has no right to either criminalize or legalize the morality of adult individuals and their interaction with other consenting adults.

Loren Simpson  
Self  
Lago Vista, TX

No one should go to jail for cannabis.

Charles Zipper

Myself

Irving, TX

So many people are dying and the dealers should know it. They are killers and should be prosecuted as such.

Katharine Neill Harris

Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy, Drug Policy Program

Houston, TX

I respectfully and strongly oppose HB 6. This bill, and its companion bill, SB 645, will not prevent overdose deaths or reduce the prevalence of fentanyl in the drug supply.

HB 6 would enhance penalties for fentanyl possession, including as little as less than one gram, and for distribution. Penalty enhancements don't deter drug use or sale. In the unlikely event that implementation of HB 6 could make a significant dent in fentanyl access and supply, people involved in manufacturing and trafficking will adapt by finding a drug alternative that is just as lethal, if not more so. There is a class of opioids called nitazenes, for example, that is popping up in more drug-related deaths and could become more prevalent.

Our current crisis shows the futility of supply-focused interventions. When the DEA cracked down on the legal supply of prescription opioids, individuals already dependent on these drugs sought out heroin. The transition from heroin to fentanyl occurred as major drug suppliers and traffickers switched to the more potent and easier-to-produce opioid in order to better evade law enforcement and increase profits.

Demand for a good stimulates the supply of that good. This basic economic principle that many of us learn in high school applies to drugs too. Penalty enhancements are ineffective because they do not address drug demand. It is human nature for people to seek out mind-altering substances. Telling them they are not allowed to does not stop them from doing it.

Effective and accessible treatment and prevention strategies—medically-assisted treatment, overdose prevention tools, health care, affordable housing, living wages—are the only way to reduce drug demand. Penalty enhancements do the opposite; they excessively punish people struggling with addiction. The far-reaching impacts of legal involvement exacerbate many of the root causes of problematic drug use and addiction—poverty, family destabilization, mental illness, poor health, and feelings of hopelessness and despair.

If Texas lawmakers sincerely want to reduce overdose deaths, they should focus on reducing barriers to care, not erecting more by further penalizing people who use drugs.

Steven Ellis

Texas First

Dallas, TX

I support this bill. How many young people, including those who inadvertently come into contact with this CCP and cartel poison, do we want to lose? Your son? Your daughter? Niece? Nephew? Child of a friend? Grandchild? The strictest penalties should be exacted against those manufacturing and distributing this poison.

Cindy Najera

CCDF usa

Lakeway, TX

I am in support of this bill. A tiny amount can kill and innocent person.

Jean Kenas

self

Carrollton, TX

It should be a criminal penalty for selling or producing of fentanyl. I agree on increasing the penalty for making or delivering less than 1 gram of fentanyl from a state jail felony to a third-degree felony. This is such serious matter and fentanyl has to be stopped immediately.

Benjamin Kilpatrick  
Self, technical support  
Burleson, TX

Fentanyl is a scourge that has killed many people, but this bill seems to stiffen the penalties for many other drugs beyond fentanyl. Enhancing the penalties for all of these drugs will not only be ineffective, it will also send many people who should be receiving medical care to lengthy prison sentences. Fentanyl has become so common because of the crackdown on much less dangerous, though still addictive, opiates. There will always be dealers as long as there are addicts and, as long as those addicts are unintentionally shunted toward the most dangerous opiates possible, there will always be dealers selling those dangerous opiates.

Deana Johnston  
self  
Dallas, TX

PLEASE SUPPORT HB 6 (GOLDMAN) The penalties for bringing illegal drugs into our country and for distributing drugs to our children cannot be strong enough.

Taylor Trevino  
self - organizer  
Austin, TX

I urge all Representatives to oppose this bill. Continuing to criminalize drug possession will only worsen the problem by prolonging and worsening the root causes of the issue.

Robert LANEY JR  
self retired  
COPELL, TX

Fentanyl is a poison that has killed, in some cases instantaneously, many of our fellow Americans; and, the punishment should reflect that.

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Hearing Date: March 28, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Melanie Adams  
Self, Retired  
Fort Worth, TX

During a time in American history so rich with understanding and opportunities of legal cannabis business, it is hard to believe that Texas has yet to advance more common sense laws.

Being a State surrounded by legal access, reduction of penalties should be a priority to protect Texans from the perpetual over reach of law enforcement. This over reach has been historically racially motivated as has cannabis law at large and the right thing to do is reduce penalties at minimum or decriminalize, which is what 82% of constituents want. Additionally, reducing penalties will protect Texans from the cartels. If you outlaw it, only the outlaws will govern it.

Current laws are untenable and lead to destruction of many young lives, college students, new parents, families, our chronically ill, our aging, our disabled, our terminally ill and as always disproportionately affect communities of color.

As a State adjacent to Mexico, it is clear that cartels have always and will always have drug trafficking routes across Texas. Increasing penalties for cannabis will push people to buy from dangerous people and places. Doing so can be deadly in the face of our opioid and fentanyl crises.

Cannabis is a beneficial plant for humans and has never caused an over dose. It has over 5,000yrs of anecdotal evidence and use and a brief 86yrs of failed prohibition. The only thing dangerous about cannabis is getting arrested for cannabis.

There are undoubtedly statistics on impact for public safety in legal states where adults can choose to use a God-given beneficial plant.

Every human has an endogenous cannabinoid system designed to utilize cannabis. We have receptors created for cannabinoids. We have consumed cannabis for thousands of years. And prohibition has proven ineffective and a failure.

Increasing penalties will not decrease cannabis usage or users or their impact on public health and safety. Cannabis use is as prevalent as drinking beer and far less harmful.

There is no division of ethnicity and professionals of all walks use cannabis. I have known dentists, attorneys, police officers and even judges in Texas who have used cannabis. Every fraternity in every college and university in Texas has access and frequent users.

86% of Texas Voters want legislation of adult use cannabis. It's high time to hear us. Reduction of penalties and adult use decriminalization is common sense law.

I do not support increasing penalties.

I also disagree with increasing expenditures to hunt down Texans and travelers at any border to search for a plant or any of the plant's consumption forms. Redirecting the expenditures towards protecting Texans from cartels and deadly drugs like illicit opioids and fentanyl is the right thing to do for our children and future generations.

Cannabis prohibition failed. Texas is failing Texans.

You can change this!

Shonda Stracener  
Self home health provider  
Gilmer, TX

I do not wish to continue the war on drugs.

Mandi Hughes  
self  
Kyle, TX

do not support

Corrina Henry  
self  
San Angelo, TX

NO!!!

Corrina Henry  
self  
San Angelo, TX

Pass HB 1937 legalizing marijuana Recreational & medical use revenue to BUILD BORDER WALL!!!!

Haley Kyles  
self manager  
Dallas, TX

In favor - the crime in Dallas county alone has grown exponentially due to the soft on crime DA in office. Texas needs to set the example in having the safest communities in the USA.

Chris Klement  
Self  
Dallas, TX

Fentanyl is destroying lives all across the nation. Unfortunately, large amounts of the drug are trafficked through Texas. To keep our families, neighbors, and friends safe from fentanyl, we need strict penalties for the manufacture, distribution, and sale of the drug. Law enforcement is working tirelessly to eradicate this awful substance from our streets. We need to make sure criminals that are apprehended and convicted face strict penalties for the gruesome harm they are doing to our communities.

Please pass HB 6.

Kevin Cskdwell  
True Texas Project  
Farmers Branch, TX

I fully support this bill and hope you do too.

Brandon Pumphrey, Mr.  
Self (Filmmaker, business owner)  
Dallas, TX

I support this greatly!

Leigh Crow

Self

Dallas, TX

I am in favor of this bill

Katrina Gary-Forte, Dr

Trade It In

Houston, TX

Historically a punitive approach, rather than a clinical/treatment or barrier-reducing approach, has been unhelpful and has potentially advanced the opioid epidemic into its 3rd decade. Many individuals have been prevented from entering the workforce or gaining a financially meaningful career once they have a drug related offense on their record. This has historically led to high rates of recidivism as these individuals try to survive life with the faced barriers caused by this punitive approach.

Rather than increasing the penalties for controlled substance offenses, perhaps pilot programs and treatment programs need to be provided to offenders who meet a certain criteria.

Dr. Gary-Foré

Skye Fredericks

self

Houston, TX

I strongly oppose this bill. It's 2023, we know that punishing people with addiction does not work. The language of this bill is extremely ignorant of the reality of drug use for those with opioid dependency and opens a dangerous avenue for fentanyl replacement with other harmful (and not legally testable in Texas) opioids.

Bradley Parsons

Self

Austin, TX

In full support of HB 200.