H-1190.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1560**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Young, Dufault, Eslick, Abbarno, Robertson, Gilday, Caldier, Corry, Barkis, Jacobsen, Chambers, Walsh, and Hoff

AN ACT Relating to the mens rea element of offenses related to possession of controlled substances, counterfeit substances, and legend drugs; amending RCW 69.50.4011, 69.50.4013, 69.50.4014, 69.41.030, and 69.41.030; creating a new section; providing an effective date; providing an expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The state of Washington relies on the provisions of RCW 69.50.4011, 69.50.4013, 69.50.4014, and 69.41.030 to prohibit the unlawful possession of drugs by its citizens. Though none of these offenses contain a mens rea element, the Washington supreme court has examined and upheld this statutory structure in the past, recognizing the legislature's authority to maintain strict liability in relation to the possession of controlled substances and other crimes. Furthermore, the legislature historically has not considered it necessary to establish an express mens rea element, as defendants have long relied on the availability of the affirmative defense of unwitting possession to protect against prosecution for unknowingly possessing illicit substances.

In light of the Washington supreme court's recent decision in *State v. Blake, Docket No. 96873-0* (February 25, 2021), which invalidated the crime of unlawful possession of a controlled substance due to its lack of a mens rea element, the legislature intends to amend relevant statutory provisions in order to restore the crime of unlawful possession of a controlled substance and to preserve the applicability of other similarly structured drug crimes. To that end, the legislature intends to establish an express mental state requirement for crimes related to unlawful possession of controlled substances, counterfeit substances, and legend drugs.

**Sec.**  RCW 69.50.4011 and 2003 c 53 s 332 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as authorized by this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to create, deliver, or knowingly possess a counterfeit substance.

(2) Any person who violates this section with respect to:

(a) A counterfeit substance classified in Schedule I or II which is a narcotic drug, or flunitrazepam classified in Schedule IV, is guilty of a class B felony and upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than ten years, fined not more than twenty-five thousand dollars, or both;

(b) A counterfeit substance which is methamphetamine, is guilty of a class B felony and upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than ten years, fined not more than twenty-five thousand dollars, or both;

(c) Any other counterfeit substance classified in Schedule I, II, or III, is guilty of a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW;

(d) A counterfeit substance classified in Schedule IV, except flunitrazepam, is guilty of a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW;

(e) A counterfeit substance classified in Schedule V, is guilty of a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

**Sec.**  RCW 69.50.4013 and 2017 c 317 s 15 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) It is unlawful for any person to knowingly possess a controlled substance unless the substance was obtained directly from, or pursuant to, a valid prescription or order of a practitioner while acting in the course of his or her professional practice, or except as otherwise authorized by this chapter.

(2) Except as provided in RCW 69.50.4014, any person who violates this section is guilty of a class C felony punishable under chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(3)(a) The possession, by a person twenty-one years of age or older, of useable marijuana, marijuana concentrates, or marijuana-infused products in amounts that do not exceed those set forth in RCW 69.50.360(3) is not a violation of this section, this chapter, or any other provision of Washington state law.

(b) The possession of marijuana, useable marijuana, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana-infused products being physically transported or delivered within the state, in amounts not exceeding those that may be established under RCW 69.50.385(3), by a licensed employee of a common carrier when performing the duties authorized in accordance with RCW 69.50.382 and 69.50.385, is not a violation of this section, this chapter, or any other provision of Washington state law.

(4)(a) The delivery by a person twenty-one years of age or older to one or more persons twenty-one years of age or older, during a single twenty-four hour period, for noncommercial purposes and not conditioned upon or done in connection with the provision or receipt of financial consideration, of any of the following marijuana products, is not a violation of this section, this chapter, or any other provisions of Washington state law:

(i) One-half ounce of useable marijuana;

(ii) Eight ounces of marijuana-infused product in solid form;

(iii) Thirty-six ounces of marijuana-infused product in liquid form; or

(iv) Three and one-half grams of marijuana concentrates.

(b) The act of delivering marijuana or a marijuana product as authorized under this subsection (4) must meet one of the following requirements:

(i) The delivery must be done in a location outside of the view of general public and in a nonpublic place; or

(ii) The marijuana or marijuana product must be in the original packaging as purchased from the marijuana retailer.

(5) No person under twenty-one years of age may ((~~possess~~)), manufacture, sell, ((~~or~~)) distribute, or knowingly possess marijuana, marijuana-infused products, or marijuana concentrates, regardless of THC concentration. This does not include qualifying patients with a valid authorization.

(6) The possession by a qualifying patient or designated provider of marijuana concentrates, useable marijuana, marijuana-infused products, or plants in accordance with chapter 69.51A RCW is not a violation of this section, this chapter, or any other provision of Washington state law.

**Sec.**  RCW 69.50.4014 and 2015 2nd sp.s. c 4 s 505 are each amended to read as follows:

Except as provided in RCW 69.50.401(2)(c) or as otherwise authorized by this chapter, any person found guilty of knowing possession of forty grams or less of marijuana is guilty of a misdemeanor.

**Sec.**  RCW 69.41.030 and 2019 c 55 s 9 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, deliver, or knowingly possess any legend drug except upon the order or prescription of a physician under chapter 18.71 RCW, an osteopathic physician and surgeon under chapter 18.57 RCW, an optometrist licensed under chapter 18.53 RCW who is certified by the optometry board under RCW 18.53.010, a dentist under chapter 18.32 RCW, a podiatric physician and surgeon under chapter 18.22 RCW, a veterinarian under chapter 18.92 RCW, a commissioned medical or dental officer in the United States armed forces or public health service in the discharge of his or her official duties, a duly licensed physician or dentist employed by the veterans administration in the discharge of his or her official duties, a registered nurse or advanced registered nurse practitioner under chapter 18.79 RCW when authorized by the nursing care quality assurance commission, a pharmacist licensed under chapter 18.64 RCW to the extent permitted by drug therapy guidelines or protocols established under RCW 18.64.011 and authorized by the commission and approved by a practitioner authorized to prescribe drugs, an osteopathic physician assistant under chapter 18.57A RCW when authorized by the board of osteopathic medicine and surgery, a physician assistant under chapter 18.71A RCW when authorized by the Washington medical commission, or any of the following professionals in any province of Canada that shares a common border with the state of Washington or in any state of the United States: A physician licensed to practice medicine and surgery or a physician licensed to practice osteopathic medicine and surgery, a dentist licensed to practice dentistry, a podiatric physician and surgeon licensed to practice podiatric medicine and surgery, a licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner, a licensed physician assistant, a licensed osteopathic physician assistant, or a veterinarian licensed to practice veterinary medicine: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the above provisions shall not apply to sale, delivery, or possession by drug wholesalers or drug manufacturers, or their agents or employees, or to any practitioner acting within the scope of his or her license, or to a common or contract carrier or warehouse operator, or any employee thereof, whose possession of any legend drug is in the usual course of business or employment: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter or chapter 18.64 RCW shall prevent a family planning clinic that is under contract with the health care authority from selling, delivering, possessing, and dispensing commercially prepackaged oral contraceptives prescribed by authorized, licensed health care practitioners: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter prohibits possession or delivery of legend drugs by an authorized collector or other person participating in the operation of a drug take-back program authorized in chapter 69.48 RCW.

(2)(a) A violation of this section involving the sale, delivery, or possession with intent to sell or deliver is a class B felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(b) A violation of this section involving possession is a misdemeanor.

**Sec.**  RCW 69.41.030 and 2020 c 80 s 41 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, deliver, or knowingly possess any legend drug except upon the order or prescription of a physician under chapter 18.71 RCW, an osteopathic physician and surgeon under chapter 18.57 RCW, an optometrist licensed under chapter 18.53 RCW who is certified by the optometry board under RCW 18.53.010, a dentist under chapter 18.32 RCW, a podiatric physician and surgeon under chapter 18.22 RCW, a veterinarian under chapter 18.92 RCW, a commissioned medical or dental officer in the United States armed forces or public health service in the discharge of his or her official duties, a duly licensed physician or dentist employed by the veterans administration in the discharge of his or her official duties, a registered nurse or advanced registered nurse practitioner under chapter 18.79 RCW when authorized by the nursing care quality assurance commission, a pharmacist licensed under chapter 18.64 RCW to the extent permitted by drug therapy guidelines or protocols established under RCW 18.64.011 and authorized by the commission and approved by a practitioner authorized to prescribe drugs, a physician assistant under chapter 18.71A RCW when authorized by the Washington medical commission, or any of the following professionals in any province of Canada that shares a common border with the state of Washington or in any state of the United States: A physician licensed to practice medicine and surgery or a physician licensed to practice osteopathic medicine and surgery, a dentist licensed to practice dentistry, a podiatric physician and surgeon licensed to practice podiatric medicine and surgery, a licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner, a licensed physician assistant, or a veterinarian licensed to practice veterinary medicine: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the above provisions shall not apply to sale, delivery, or possession by drug wholesalers or drug manufacturers, or their agents or employees, or to any practitioner acting within the scope of his or her license, or to a common or contract carrier or warehouse operator, or any employee thereof, whose possession of any legend drug is in the usual course of business or employment: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter or chapter 18.64 RCW shall prevent a family planning clinic that is under contract with the health care authority from selling, delivering, possessing, and dispensing commercially prepackaged oral contraceptives prescribed by authorized, licensed health care practitioners: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter prohibits possession or delivery of legend drugs by an authorized collector or other person participating in the operation of a drug take-back program authorized in chapter 69.48 RCW.

(2)(a) A violation of this section involving the sale, delivery, or possession with intent to sell or deliver is a class B felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(b) A violation of this section involving possession is a misdemeanor.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Except for section 6 of this act, this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 5 of this act expires July 1, 2022.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 6 of this act takes effect July 1, 2022.

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