

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON CANNABIS POLICY
2025-2026 (194th) BILL SUMMARY**

Bill Number:	H.174
Title:	An Act relative to raising the standalone cap for marijuana establishments
Sponsor(s):	Rep. Michael Soter (Bellingham)
Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Reporting Deadline:	June 8, 2025
Prior History:	None.
Similar Matters:	H.49 (Rep. Mark J. Cusack); H.158 (Rep. Meghan K. Kilcoyne); H.160 (Rep. Samantha Montaño); H.171 (Rep. Dawne Shand); S.75 (Sen. William N. Brownsberger); S.78 (Sen. James B. Eldridge); S.99 (Sen. Jacob R. Oliveira)

CURRENT LAW:

Section 1 of Chapter 94G of the Massachusetts General Laws defines a licensee as a person or entity licensed by the Cannabis Control Commission to operate a marijuana establishment under Chapter 94G.

Section 16 of Chapter 94G prohibits any licensee from being granted more than three of each of the following licenses: marijuana retailer license, medical marijuana treatment center license, marijuana product manufacturer license, or marijuana cultivator license, though a licensee is permitted to hold up to three of each type.

SUMMARY:

The bill amends Sections 1 and 16 of Chapter 94G to alter the existing limit on the number of cannabis licenses that a person or entity can control.

Sections 1 and 2 amend Section 1 of Chapter 94G to codify Cannabis Control Commission regulations interpreting the statutory term “licensee” to mean a person or entity with direct or indirect control of a license (935 CMR 500.002), except that it alters the qualification threshold by no longer considering whether the person makes major decisions or executes significant contracts.

Section 3 strikes out Section 16 of chapter 94G and replaces it with language lifting the retailer license cap from three to six for a person or entity with direct or indirect control. The new license cap is to be introduced in a staggered manner, with the retailer cap increasing to four licenses in

the first year after the law's passage and to five licenses in the second year. The law further provides that a person or entity with direct or indirect control can only obtain more than three licenses only through gaining ownership over a marijuana retailer license in good standing at the time the law is passed.

Section 3 also amends Section 16 of Chapter 94G to require the CCC to adopt regulations requiring that any person or entity seeking to have direct or indirect control of more than three retail licenses purchase an existing marijuana business. Further, the CCC must give priority consideration to the purchase of retailer licenses majority-owned by social equity businesses, Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), or Veteran Businesses Enterprises (VBEs).