

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill amends the State's controlled substance schedules. Many of the proposed changes will align Minnesota's controlled substance schedules II through V with federal schedules II through V. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has amended the federal schedules, but the State has not made corresponding changes to the State's controlled substance schedules. Of the federal changes, the addition of tramadol to Schedule IV and the movement of hydrocodone-containing products (*e.g.*, Vicodin) from Schedule III to Schedule II are the two most noteworthy.

Healthcare practitioners will not be impacted by the federal rescheduling of prescription drugs such as Vicodin because the practitioners will continue to be authorized to prescribe and dispense the drugs. The changes will, however, strengthen the tools available to law enforcement agencies and prosecutors in holding persons who are found in possession of, selling or abusing these drugs without a valid prescription accountable.

This bill also adds certain synthetic cannabinoid, stimulant, and hallucinogenic drugs to Minnesota's controlled substance schedule I. Most offenses involving schedule I drugs are felonies. An important exception is the penalties for the sale and possession of synthetic cannabinoids. Although some synthetic cannabinoid sale offenses are felonies, others are gross misdemeanors and the possession of synthetic cannabinoids is a misdemeanor.