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Sponsor Statement House Bill 273

"An Act extending the termination date of the Marijuana Control Board; and providing for an effective date."

House Bill 273 extends the termination date for the Marijuana Control Board until June 30, 2024.

Per statute, this board is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2018 with a one-year wind down if the legislature does not pass legislation extending it. The licensing function will remain after this date; however, the administrative functions of the board would transfer to the department.

Legislative Audit reviewed the board's operations and determined that it is in the best interest of the state to extend this board. The audit makes four recommendations and recommends a six-year extension with a new termination date of June 30, 2024. This is shy of the full eight-year extension that Legislative Audit is authorized to provide.

The recommendations are as follows:

1. The board members, Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) director, and enforcement supervisor should work together to formally establish an enforcement plan to direct limited enforcement resources.
2. The board and the AMCO director should implement a process to monitor and track complaints to ensure they are assessed for follow up action and investigated in a timely manner.
3. The AMCO director should develop written procedures for establishing the expiration dates of marijuana handler permits and ensure staff receive the appropriate training.
4. The AMCO director should develop and implement procedures to segregate the duties for calculating and remitting fees to local governments.

The Marijuana Control Board is a regulatory and quasi-judicial board consisting of five members appointed by the governor, created for controlling the cultivation, manufacture, and sale of marijuana in the state. The board consists of one member from the public safety sector, one from the public health sector, one residing in a rural area, one actively engaged in the marijuana industry, and one who is either from the general public or actively engaged in the marijuana industry.

The continuation of the Marijuana Control Board is important to the health and safety of Alaskans.

Thank you for your support of House Bill 273.