

Questions For The Consumer Protection Commissioner Nominee

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Commissioner of Consumer Protection

The Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) commissioner administers a regulatory agency that, among other things:

1. investigates consumer complaints about unfair or deceptive trade practices;
2. licenses certain professionals and tradespeople;
3. oversees the sale of alcoholic beverages;
4. works to prevent the sale of adulterated or contaminated food;
5. regulates the distribution of prescription drugs, including medical marijuana; and
6. implements and administers the state's gambling laws ([CGS §§ 21a-1 & -11](#)).

Questions

Background

1. How has your background and experience prepared you for this position?
2. What lessons have you learned from serving as deputy commissioner that will benefit you in this position?
3. If confirmed, what will be your top priorities for the agency? How will the state's fiscal circumstances impact these priorities?

Prescription Drugs

1. DCP administers the state's prescription drug monitoring program. Are there aspects of the program you would like to see changed and, if so, in what way?
2. Are there any additional enforcement powers the legislature should provide to DCP in combating opioid-related overdoses?
3. DCP administers the medical marijuana program. How difficult is it to administer the program? Are there additional medical conditions that you think should qualify under the program?

Occupational Licensing

There have been several proposals to amend DCP's occupational licensing or registration requirements.

1. Do you think the state has too many occupational licensing requirements? How does the number of occupations licensed in Connecticut compare to those of other states?
2. What is the right balance of protecting consumers through licensing without placing undue burden on the workers?
3. In general, how do you think DCP is doing in enforcing the state's occupational licensing laws? What are some of the enforcement challenges?

Alcohol Regulation

Governor Malloy has annually submitted a proposal to amend the state's minimum bottle pricing law to allow retailers to sell alcohol at the actual bottle acquisition cost rather than the wholesaler's posted bottle price plus delivery costs.

1. What are the costs and benefits associated with minimum pricing laws for alcohol? Do you favor a complete repeal of these laws?
2. If the proposal passes, how do you think it will affect consumer prices? Do you think the state will make money due to this change?
3. What other statutory restrictions, if any, do you think artificially inflate alcohol pricing?
4. Some have suggested that Connecticut has too many liquor permits and the state's permitting system is too complicated. Do you agree with this statement and, if so, what steps could be taken to simplify the system?

Gaming

1. This session, DCP submitted a proposal to generally transfer its charitable gaming (e.g., bingo, bazaars or raffles) investigation, oversight, and permitting functions to the municipalities where these games occur. Why does the department want to transfer these functions to municipalities?
2. There have also been proposals to open a commercial casino in the state. Does DCP have the capacity to regulate casinos? What concerns, if any, does the department have concerning the opening of a commercial casino?
3. DCP recently investigated the Connecticut Lottery Corporation related to its Cash 5 game and a scam committed by several lottery agents to generate winning tickets. What steps are being taken to prevent these types of abuses in the future?

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