

Questions for the Consumer Protection Commissioner Nominee

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Commissioner of Consumer Protection ([CGS §§ 21a-1 & -11](#))

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 gaming laws.

Questions

General

1. What are the most important things you have learned as commissioner? How will that knowledge help you in the next term?
2. What will be your top priorities for the agency? How will the state's fiscal circumstances impact these priorities?
3. What are DCP's legislative proposals for the 2019 session?

Alcohol

1. Some have suggested that Connecticut has too many liquor permits and that the state's permitting system is too complicated. Do you agree and, if so, what steps could be taken to simplify the system?
2. What are the costs and benefits associated with minimum pricing laws for alcohol? Do you favor a complete repeal of these laws? How would the repeal of minimum pricing affect consumer prices?
3. The legislature often considers proposals to increase or alter what manufacturers may sell for on- or off-premises consumption. Does the department have concerns about how these proposals would affect the three-tier alcohol distribution system? Do you think the three-tier system is still needed? Please explain.
4. Existing law allows a package store permit for every 2,500 residents ([CGS § 30-14a](#)). Do you think this is the right ratio?

Food Safety

1. [PA 18-141](#), §§ 13-19, allowed individuals to produce cottage food products in their private residential dwelling's home kitchen for sale directly to the consumer. How is the program running? Have there been any problems?
2. What part of food safety enforcement does DCP prioritize? What is the biggest challenge?

Gaming

1. DCP is tasked with regulating the East Windsor Casino ([CGS § 12-578a](#)). How prepared is the department to regulate this casino? What is the department's stance on opening a commercial casino?
2. During the 2018 session, the legislature considered [SB 540](#), which had DCP as the regulating agency for sports betting. Do you have concerns about legalization? Is the department equipped to regulate sports betting?
3. What kind of relationship does DCP have with the Connecticut Lottery Corporation (CLC)? As the oversight agency, how involved is DCP with CLC on a day-to-day basis? What kind of information does the lottery share?
4. [PA 17-231](#) generally transferred charitable gaming (e.g., bingo, bazaars or raffles) investigation, oversight, and permitting functions to the municipalities where these games are conducted. Have there been any issues since the transfer?

Marijuana

1. DCP administers the medical marijuana program. Has the department encountered any difficulty in administering the program? Should additional medical conditions qualify under the program?
2. There have been discussions of legalizing marijuana for recreational use with DCP as the regulatory agency. Do you have concerns about the legalization of recreational marijuana? Is the department equipped to regulate it?
3. How do you think legalizing recreational marijuana would affect the medical marijuana program?

Occupational Licensing

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 are the challenges of having reciprocity agreements with other states? What could help overcome these challenges?
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?

Prescription Drugs

1. DCP administers the state's prescription drug monitoring program. Are there aspects of the program that 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?

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