



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2024

Tennessee companies file federal civil rights lawsuit after local police officers illegally seize more than \$1.3 million worth of hemp without a warrant.

NASHVILLE – On Monday, May 20, 2024, Litson PLLC filed a civil rights lawsuit in federal court on behalf of its clients Old School Vapor and SAK Wholesale for the illegal seizure of \$1.35 million worth of legal hemp products by the Spring Hill Police Department.

On May 9, 2024, officers executed search warrants at Old School Vapor unrelated to hemp products. The warrants did not allow for the seizure of hemp products, yet law enforcement seized over \$1 million of hemp anyway after being directed by the District Attorney’s Office that it was the “same damn thing” as marijuana. It is not. And the seizure of these legal products plainly violated the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

Hemp products are legal to sell under federal and Tennessee law, provided that the Delta-9 THC levels are not greater than 0.3% of dry weight. The illegally seized hemp was fully compliant with federal and Tennessee law, and our clients presented third-party laboratory test results to law enforcement indicating that the products were within legal limits. Officers did not care and, when they did their own testing a few days later, ignored results indicating that the product was legal.

Fortunately, deputies with the Williamson County Sheriff’s Department refused to seize any hemp products from Old School Vapor’s Franklin location because the hemp “wasn’t in the warrant.” Nonetheless, over a million dollars’ worth of legal hemp products were illegally seized from Old School Vapor’s other four locations and from SAK Wholesale’s warehouse.

The lawsuit seeks damages of over \$1,350,607 and attorney fees. The lawsuit also seeks a finding by the court that the Defendants violated our clients’ constitutional rights. A motion for preliminary injunction filed on May 22, 2024, seeks the return of hundreds of pounds of hemp, so that it is not ruined in police storage.

Old School Vapor is a family-owned smoke shop with five locations in Columbia, Franklin, and Spring Hill, Tennessee that sells hemp, tobacco, and vape products, and it opened its first location in 2014. SAK Wholesale is a family-owned wholesale business located in Columbia, Tennessee, that opened in January 2024.

The Defendants in the lawsuit are Brent Cooper, the District Attorney General of the 22nd Judicial District of Tennessee; Don Brite, the Chief of Police of the Spring Hill Police Department; Andrew Burdett, Sergeant of the Spring Hill Police Department, who supervised the illegal search and seizure operation; and the City of Spring Hill.

All media inquiries can be directed to Alex Little at Litson PLLC. He can be reached via email at alex@litson.co and via phone at (615) 985-8205.