

Eben Sumner
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LD 365

Good Morning Senator Hickman and Representative Supica, and the esteemed members of the Committee on Veteran's and Legal Affairs. My name is Eben Sumner, I am a resident of West Baldwin, Maine. I am the President and legislative chair of the Maine Growers Alliance as well as a founding member of The Cannabis Council of Maine. I am also a shaping member of the Seed2Health group and operate one business in the medical program and another business in hemp manufacturing.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you all today. I ask you to consider this amendment to LD 365. My colleagues and I in the Cannabis Council of Maine feel that this set of Graduated Sanctions uses common sense to protect the health and safety of the public as well as our beloved medical cannabis program. As you'll see in our amendment, there is a major theme here revolving around corrective processes. Our industry wants to be treated just like other industries, and that is to receive help through corrective action as opposed to fines and licensure revocation. It is our consensus that these graduated sanctions will help guide the medical program by removing any ambiguity, this is what the program participants are looking for. It is my experience that the many Mainers who work very hard to be successful in the medical program wish to be as compliant as possible. I have heard this story many times from many of my Alliance membership as well as throughout the program participants. In order to stay compliant, these folks need proper guidance on what is and is not expected of them. To put things into perspective, the Office of Cannabis Policy just sent out a criterium checklist last week to the program participants so they know what it is needed to be in compliance when they are inspected. While we appreciate the arrival of this document, as an industry we have been asking for this checklist for several years. Based on that pattern, we feel it is imperative that we utilize these graduated sanctions so program participants will also have the same clarity on operations as well. When guidelines are given, they provide the opportunity for fair and equitable treatment across the program which directly effects Maine's patients by bolstering public health and safety.

Thank you all for your time this afternoon and for the opportunity to speak in support of the Cannabis Council of Maine's amendment to LD365. I'm happy to take any questions now or offline.