

I want to thank the sponsors for presenting and supporting this extremely important bill, and a big thank you to Arleigh Krauss for reading my testimony as I am currently on an airplane and unable to present to you all in person as I had planned. I have submitted written testimony as well in anticipation of this testimony going over its allotted time:

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the esteemed members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Eben Sumner, a resident of West Baldwin, Maine. I am here today speaking as the President and Legislative Chair of the Maine Growers Alliance, a founding member of the Cannabis Council of Maine, shaper participant in Seed2Health, and multiple business owner in the Maine and global cannabis space.

I am here today to ask that you all support LD1918 as written.

I would like to begin my testimony with a personal story that is more than likely a similar experience for everyone here. The global lifetime risk for developing cancer is estimated to be around 1 in 6 for men and 1 in 5 for women. This means we all have loved someone or at least known someone close to us who suffered with this disease.

In 2006 my mother was diagnosed with gastric cancer at the youthful age of 56. As a result, my family spent the next years researching and trying everything we could to help her achieve remission. In 2007, we learned about vitamin C infusion therapy and were fortunate enough to enroll her in an alternative medicine trial program. That specific program determined that cancer cells cannot survive in a high vitamin C environment. This bill is important for Maine and its citizens because LD1819 provides an onramp for research just like this. Valuable research leads to breakthroughs in alternative medicine that typically do not fall within the modern pharmacological medicine guidelines. And those breakthroughs may give our loved ones a longer life or more comfortable death, which most agree is of utmost importance and the number one human right; the foundation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Countless global research and trialing shows the efficacy of complimentary alternative medicines, especially with cannabis. However, cannabis is but one powerful tool among the many alternative medicines available now and becoming increasingly more available as pharmacology fails to provide results.

Families, friends, and professionals enduring the real pain of a medical crisis will look up and down for help towards hope and survival. Today we have the opportunity to provide answers for those people through the creation of the MCCAC and the MCAHB.

My work experience is in cannabis of all forms, but I mostly focus on the hemp space as it is a global market and affords the ability for a wider swath of research due to its more lax regulations. However, because of the stagnation with Federal oversight in the US, I look to research and markets outside of the country. Just one example is that I export medicine to Brazil, a country that is brand new to legal, compliant cannabis medicine, and taking it very seriously. My company works with pharmaceutical companies, the Brazilian Federal Government, and the Ministry of Agriculture to forward research, education, and implementation of cannabis medicine throughout the country.

I do hope for the day that the Federal Government will join the research that is happening around the world, but we have the opportunity in Maine to lead our country with the inception and implementation

of these programs. In fact, research has and is currently happening, and will continue to happen in our state. Seed2Health is a group of professionals from around the country, headquartered in Maine, trying to facilitate the major task of understanding, and representing efficacy and inefficacy of alternative medicines. This group is self-funded through its' incredible volunteers who offer up time from their impressive and busy lives. It is paramount for the state to recognize this and to provide access to medical program subsidies to continue the research that this group and others in the state so desperately need.

Another important fact is Maine patients' access to medicine. My colleagues and I are genuinely in fear of an already dwindling medical program and its ability to recover. In a world where the program no longer exists, patients will not have the access they demand and experience today. For example, a patient living with Chron's disease that treats their symptoms with a specific cannabis extract formula may require a particular dose of CBG, CBD, and THC in capsule form. Without a medical market, that Chron's patient may no longer have access to symptom relief. Please consider the fact that adult use cannabis companies will not provide this type of tailored medicine to individuals. Their focus is profits, which is to sell their products at the highest margins to the most consumers. This is a real and not far off problem. On top of this, if our Maine patients lose this access, those few that have the ability will be forced to travel out of state to procure their medicine, resulting in breaking federal law.

I ask you all in this committee today a hard question; to dredge up memories of your past experiences in life and death within your family and friend cohorts.

I ask you to relive those difficult memories and the helplessness of having to rely on one source of medical treatment.

Finally, I ask that you help usher in a vehicle for new research in alternative medicines, and most importantly to give Mainers and their loved ones another outlet for hope and comfort.

Thank you for your time and consideration today. I am happy to be available to speak with each committee member as needed.