

Senator Hickman and members of the VLA committee, thank you in advance for hearing my written testimony on LD 1819 today. My name is Greg Newland and I am the Chief Scientific Officer and Co-Founder of Nova Analytic Labs located in Portland. I am also a Shaper Participant of the Seed2Health Learning Alliance. I am submitting my testimony in support of certain portions of this bill while also describing my concerns.

As my other colleagues in Seed2Health have mentioned, funding for research in Cannabis and other medicinal plants is severely lacking not only here in Maine but nationwide. Maine's medical market is historic and unique in many ways but most importantly, there is a rich history of helping patients who are suffering from Ailments not cured or moderated by pharmaceutical medications. It is for this reason, Seed2Health has brought together volunteers from all aspects of the medical cannabis community to help each other gain the knowledge required to provide the best medical care possible in spite of the limited resources available to them due to the federal illegality of Cannabis. These volunteers have spent countless hours over the last several years to determine what is needed most by patients, caregivers, manufacturers, and cultivators to make this program as successful as possible. Without a legitimate cannabis market, it's not the operators that suffer as much as the patients they are there to serve. The very premise of what this group does is always centric to the patients' needs first.

I have been with this group for going on 3 years and worked tirelessly on writing guidances that ensure that regardless of which laboratory tests the product, the same rigor will be applied to ensure that patient safety and product reliability are always maintained. We have used every resource possible to do the necessary research to ensure the guidances are accurate based on what other industries have provided but as we know many of the methodologies from Tobacco or pharmaceutical companies do not transfer or translate to Cannabis which is why we need to do much of this work on our own dime. This bill can and should be used to help ensure that this research is done correctly. The research already completed has contributed significantly to what we have coined an "Intelligent Testing" approach. This approach focuses on the tests that are necessary based on specific product type and makes determinations of frequency of testing based on the liability to the end consumer not to the big business's bottom line. This approach ensures that the patient and the caregiver has the required information to make informed decisions about the patient's best care regimen.

Beyond testing, this research helps us to build a database of all aspects of the life cycle of the plant from Seed to manufacturing, to route of administration. Participants in this program will have access to information never provided before while having the confidence that the product is safe and has been tested under rigorous guidelines created from this research. Without the proper funds to do this research it is my fear that much of this required information would be lost.

Where my testimony provides negative comments to LD 1819, revolves around the management of the committee. This committee must establish rigorous stipulations around the funding to ensure that participation on the committee is unbiased and fair to all seeking funds for research. This committee must ensure that the funding is used in a way that props up all

aspects of the business which includes not only growers, but manufacturers, testing labs, software companies, distributors, caregivers, and dispensaries. I feel that if we are serious about a legitimate medical market here in Maine, we need to have more, not less, regulation to ensure that the products consumed by the most unhealthy desperate of our people, are not only safe but consistent and rich with information so the consumer can also make an informed decision. Without these regulations, or a system in place to help consumers become more educated about their choices, we cannot honestly call ourselves a true medical market. It is the patients' right to know as much about their medicine as possible and to have the assumption of safety. Please ensure that this committee has the patient as its primary responsibility. If this happens, I believe with great confidence that all business participants will be served well.