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LD 1914

My name is David Shields, a retired resident of Nobleboro. I am writing to share my concerns about Maine's prohibitions that preclude my access to psilocybin to treat my chronic cluster headaches.

I am testifying on how these prohibitions make it impossible for me to take advantage of what appears to be a possible treatment for this debilitating malady. My cluster headaches began 2 years ago, and since then, my quality of life has greatly deteriorated.

My wife and I recently moved to Maine to enjoy time with our family, especially our young granddaughter. But during the downturn portion of my chronic cluster headache cycles, which normally last for months at a time, I cannot function normally because of extreme pain and crippling fatigue. As a result, I cannot participate in family activities. Additionally, a small consulting business that I started, shortly after retirement, has become almost impossible to continue with.

I want to share my story with the Council to explain how cluster headaches have greatly diminished my quality of life. My wife and I were diligent about saving for retirement so we could travel, spend more time with family and take advantage of learning programs for seniors. My consulting business was also adding a great deal to my quality of life because it kept my mind sharp and the extra income allowed us to spend time together doing what my wife and I enjoyed.

I am sharing this story with the Council to help you understand how debilitating chronic cluster headaches have been, not only for me, but for my family as well. During the first 7 years of retirement, I felt that I was contributing to the quality of my family members' lives. I also was getting great satisfaction helping my clients improve their businesses by sharing my years of experience investigating and commercializing new business opportunities.

Traditional treatments for chronic cluster headaches are insufficient. While investigating other possible medical solutions, I learned about testing programs for psilocybin, which appeared to show that taking psilocybin may offer a solution to my suffering. But current regulations are making it impossible for me to see if it works. This is very frustrating to me because what may hold the promise for a life-changing treatment, allowing me to go back to a normal, healthy life, is currently out of reach.

I am very hopeful that the council will give greater consideration to changing current regulations to make psilocybin available to cluster headache sufferers. Based on everything I've read, as well as what my doctors have told me, psilocybin could allow me to return to a normal life.

I would like to thank the chair of this council for reading my testimony. Your consideration of this testimony and my suggested solution is very much appreciated.