



**Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee of Veterans and Legal Affairs,
Maine State Legislature, in opposition to LD 2147 – An Act to Remove the
Requirement for Edible Cannabis Products to Be Stamped or Embossed on Each
Serving with a Universal Symbol**

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Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

Thank you for your time today. I speak before you today as the founder and past president of Doctors for Drug Policy Reform (or D4DPR) in opposition to LD 2147.

A little background about me. I attended Princeton University, received my medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and completed my residency at McLean Hospital of Harvard Medical School. I am a board-certified psychiatrist based in Princeton, New Jersey, a Clinical Associate Professor at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.

While working as a private-practice psychiatrist and educator, I have dedicated much of my career to the legalization and destigmatization of cannabis use.

I am an advocate for simplified labeling standards: the nationwide adoption of a single cannabis product symbol, the standardization of a universal cannabis information label, and product warnings that require only the most necessary information presented in a clear, straightforward format.

That is why, having testified in over a dozen states and the U.S. Congress, never once have I opposed a bill on simplifying labeling requirements, but here I am. I oppose LD 2147, and I fully support Maine's requirement for edibles to bear a universal symbol that enables people of all ages to distinguish cannabis products from other products.

The legal cannabis industry should be competitive with the unregulated market, which is why overregulation can be as bad or even worse than underregulation. But one principle that cannot be compromised is in the protection of public health and safety. Unfortunately, LD 2147 crosses this line, stripping regulators of an important tool to reduce accidental ingestions of cannabis edibles by adults and minors.

And this isn't just a matter of opinion. There is at least one recent peer-reviewed experimental study supporting the efficacy of embossing of cannabis edibles and at least two studies demonstrating the value of a universal symbol on edible products, all of which I have shared in my written testimony.^{1,2,3}

Although safer than alcohol and tobacco for adults, cannabis is not harmless, especially when individuals don't realize they've consumed THC. An embossed or printed symbol on edibles is the last line of defense against accidental ingestion, and it's one that the Maine Office of Cannabis Policy should continue to require.

There may be ways that Maine's cannabis packaging regulations can be streamlined without jeopardizing public safety. I assure you all that this is not one of those ways, and I strongly urge you to reject this measure.

I'll be happy to answer your questions, and I thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,



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¹ Goodman, S., Hammond, D. "THC labeling on cannabis products: an experimental study of approaches for labeling THC servings on cannabis edibles." *J Cannabis Res* 4, 17 (2022).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s42238-022-00124-1>

² Leos-Toro C, Fong GT, Meyer SB, Hammond D. "Cannabis labelling and consumer understanding of THC levels and serving sizes." *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2020 Mar 1;208:107843. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2020.107843. Epub 2020 Feb 7. PMID: 32044091.

³ Katherine M. Kosa, Kristen C. Giombi, Caroline B. Rains, Sheryl C. Cates, "Consumer use and understanding of labelling information on edible marijuana products sold for recreational use in the states of Colorado and Washington," *International Journal of Drug Policy*, Volume 43, 2017, Pages 57-66, ISSN 0955-3959, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2017.01.006>.