

Written Testimony of Gillian Schauer, PhD, MPH on L.D. 2147.

Chairman Hickman, Chairwoman Supica, Ranking Member Rudnicki, and members of the committee,

Thank you for hearing my testimony today. For the record, my name is Gillian Schauer. I have a PhD and Master of Public Health, and more than a decade of experience working at the intersection of cannabis policy, consumer safety, and public health. I am the Executive Director of the Cannabis Regulators Association, a nonpartisan government association that convenes cannabis regulators across 45 states and U.S. territories. My testimony today is my own and not an official position of the Cannabis Regulators Association or any of our member states.

I wanted to testify to share with you the public health rationale for requiring edibles to be stamped or embossed with a universal symbol denoting that the product is cannabis and/or contains THC. While the outer package containing cannabis is required in almost all states to carry a universal symbol, increasingly, many states, including the state of Maine, allow manufactures to have individually packaged servings within that larger package. These servings can be individually packaged in clear plastic wrapping (like Flowrap). Think about a big bag of lifesavers that contains individual lifesavers wrapped in clear plastic.

Embossing or stamping the universal symbol on the actual cannabis edible is less about preventing access by small children – who may not understand the symbol – and more about making sure that older children, teenagers, and even adults who might come across these individual cannabis edible servings understand that they contain THC. Let me give you a couple hypothetical scenarios:

- A parent takes some individually wrapped servings of a THC gummy out of the package and throws them into their purse or bag. They forget they are in there. Their eleven-year-old asks for a snack and digs through the bag for something and finds those. Without the symbol, the kid would have no idea the wrapped item wasn't a normal gummy or candy. They wouldn't even think to stop and ask.
- Another scenario – a couple heads out on a date night and leaves some individually wrapped THC chocolates in a bowl on a high counter at their house. The babysitter sees them and thinks they are candy and has some. A universal symbol on the chocolate itself might have prevented that.

These examples illustrate why states require the universal symbol to be on the product itself. At least five other states require something similar in their adult use cannabis markets – including states with large and established markets – like Colorado and Nevada. In an era where many

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cannabis products contain multiple, individually packaged servings that can be separated from the original packaging that denotes the product is cannabis, having the universal symbol on the product itself is important communication for older children and adults alike.