

ELIZABETH Hayes
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My name is Elizabeth Hayes. I am a MOFGA Certified organic farmer, and a MOFGA certified medical cannabis caregiver. My husband and I operate Panorama Seeds and Art and Craft cannabis. Our farm is committed to organic farming and producing herbal medicine while prioritizing ecological stewardship, resource conservation and community service. I am submitting testimony in opposition to the rule changes proposed by the office of cannabis policy. Many of the proposed rules have been introduced in previous sessions and I testified against them then and will continue to oppose over regulation in the medical program. Across the country this trend of over regulation has been damaging medical programs at the detriment of patients and small business owners. I have watched the meetings of the medical cannabis subcommittee and support the efforts made there to clarify the rule and ensure that it reflects legislative intent and the relationships that already exist between patients and caregivers. I would like to see that work continue. Maine was the second state in the nation to decriminalize cannabis and we enjoy the best medical program in the country that affords patients convenient access to the producers of high-quality affordable medicine. We would like to see it continue to function the way it has been without any major changes or further restrictions.

I would like to express gratitude to the members of this committee who have worked to push back against the stigma that surrounds this plant and this industry. It continues to be a huge challenge for the regulated community in our interactions with our neighbors, towns, regulators and legislators who see people who work with this plant as deviant and delinquent. So I sincerely thank all of you who have been able to approach this industry with the same respect as other legal regulated industries in Maine.

Please do not adopt these rules. The work of the subcommittee to align rule, statute, and legislative intent is sure to result in a much more satisfactory result.