



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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18 Feb 24

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: LD 2204, An Act to Combat Racketeering in Scheduled Drugs by Certain Organizations

Committee Chair Senator Beebe-Center, Committee Chair Representative Salisbury and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

Thank you for allowing me to address you, my fellow committee members,, on LD 2204, An Act to Combat Racketeering in Scheduled Drugs by Certain Organizations, a bill I proudly co-sponsored and wholeheartedly endorsed.

Currently, there are hundreds of homes in Maine that have been purchased by organized crime entities known as Asian Transnational Criminal Organizations are being used as grow sites for illicit marijuana operations.

These criminal organizations purchase the properties through shell corporations, often fraudulently using grant or financial aid programs aimed at assisting families gain housing, and then convert these residential properties to commercial grade facilities. Then, they more often than not, use people who are trafficked into the United States for the sole purpose of working at these facilities to pay of their debts to the crime syndicate. These people work with little or no pay and under horrible conditions and are used because they make convenient ‘fall guys’ (or gals) should individual sites come under scrutiny from law enforcement. These organizations also often take advantage of honest and innocent people and organizations to hide their illicit activities and to provide an insulating buffer against prosecution.

These criminal organizations have taken hold in the State of Maine, as they have in Oklahoma, because of the permissive cannabis culture and the rural nature of the state. But, this bill is not about marijuana. This bill is about foreign criminal organizations that are ignoring Maine laws to profit, often using slave labor as the means to achieve that end.

House District 31

Atkinson Township, Brownville, Dover-Foxcroft, Lake View Plantation, Medford, Milo, Orneville Township, & Southeast Piscataquis

I firmly believe that we have an obligation to provide our law enforcement agencies and prosecutors with the tools to effectively fight these organized crime entities and stop these illicit operations. LD 2204 would accomplish that, and more importantly, would help end the human trafficking used in these enterprises.

I encourage our committee to consider this legislation and support it with a vote of 'Ought To Pass'. I thank you for your time and will gladly answer any questions to my ability during the work session.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chad R. Perkins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Rep. Chad R. Perkins
District 31

ATT:

CF:

Committee Chair Senator Beebe-Center
Committee Chair Representative Salisbury
CJPS Committee Members

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