



March 4th, 2024

To: **Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs**

From: **Downtown Lewiston Association
Lewiston, Maine 04240**

Subject: Testimony in Support of LD 40

Hello Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Honorable Members of the VLA Committee,

My name is **John R. Grenier** and I'm testifying on behalf of The Downtown Lewiston Association. Our mission is to position The Downtown Lewiston Commercial Area as the cultural and economic heart of the region. Our membership includes the business community, non-profit organizations, residents, and friends of downtown who share a collective vision for a vibrant and dynamic downtown in Lewiston. We achieve our vision through collaborative advocacy efforts, marketing our distinctive assets, fostering economic development, expanding cultural offerings, and promoting community-based events.

We would like to offer our support for LD 40 as a piece of legislation that not only helps cannabis businesses in the Downtown Lewiston area, but across the state. This bill helps to destigmatize the cannabis industry - something that is critical in our current era of post outright prohibition but pre federal legalization.

Unnecessary burdens on businesses like annual fingerprinting and background checks, individual identification cards for employees in cultivation, retail, and manufacturing industries, ID check at the door for adult use stores (as opposed to ID check at the point of sale like all other age-controlled industries), license revocation for minor license violations, and \$100,000 fines (fines greater than 66 times the highest fines in the alcohol industry) all combine to form a regulatory framework that is not friendly to Maine small businesses.

We support small, Maine-based businesses, and because of this, we support LD 40. Please consider passing this legislation and taking a major step forward in supporting Maine's largest agricultural crop and fastest growing industry.

Best Regards,

John R. Grenier

Board Member

Downtown Lewiston Association