

chandler st pierre  
Augusta  
LD 40

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for LD 40 - An Act to Amend the Maine Marijuana Legalization Act. As a member of the cannabis community in Maine, I believe LD 40 represents a pivotal step towards refining and fortifying the regulatory framework governing our state's cannabis industry.

The failed War on Drugs, initiated in the 1970s and persisting for decades, is marked by a misguided and punitive approach to drug control that focused on law enforcement rather than addressing underlying social and health issues. Championed by administrations like Nixon's, it disproportionately targeted minority communities and resulted in mass incarcerations. Despite enormous financial expenditures, the War on Drugs failed to curb drug use, instead perpetuating systemic inequalities, fueling a thriving illicit market, and contributing to the erosion of civil liberties. The approach has increasingly been criticized for its lack of effectiveness, emphasizing the need for a more compassionate and health-oriented approach to drug policy.

#### Addressing Industry-Specific Challenges:

LD 40 tackles critical issues that have hindered the cannabis industry's growth. The proposed elimination of the annual fingerprinting requirement is a welcome change, aligning the cannabis sector more closely with other comparable industries that do not face such stringent and recurring background checks. This move not only streamlines processes for businesses but also contributes to fostering a more inclusive and fair environment for industry participants.

#### Equitable Licensing and Operational Adjustments:

LD 40's provisions to streamline the licensing process, remove disqualifications based on past drug offenses, and establish parameters for fair enforcement are essential for promoting an equitable industry. These changes not only address historical disparities but also contribute to a more level playing field for cannabis businesses. Adjustments, such as removing restrictions on display rearrangement, demonstrate a commitment to common-sense regulatory changes that benefit both businesses and consumers.

#### Eliminating Unjust Stigma:

The historical context of cannabis prohibition has left lingering stigmas that unfairly affect the industry. LD 40 seeks to eliminate remnants of discriminatory policies and bring our laws in line with the realities of cannabis legalization in Maine. By doing so, the legislation takes a significant step towards removing unjust stigmas associated with the cannabis industry.

#### Fostering Economic Growth and Inclusivity:

LD 40 recognizes the economic potential of the cannabis industry and aims to create an environment conducive to its growth. The proposed changes are not just about regulatory adjustments; they are about fostering an inclusive space where businesses can thrive without unnecessary hindrances. This approach aligns with the broader goals of economic development and community engagement.

In conclusion, LD 40 is a well-crafted piece of legislation that addresses longstanding concerns within the cannabis industry. By promoting fairness, inclusivity, and efficiency, LD 40 sets the stage for a thriving cannabis sector in Maine. I urge the Committee to support LD 40 and contribute to the establishment of a robust and forward-looking regulatory framework for our state's cannabis industry.

Thank you for your attention and dedication to shaping policies that benefit our community.

Sincerely,

Chandler St. Pierre