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LD 40

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and honorable members of the committee, My name is Don Ellis, and I've been in the cannabis industry here in Maine for quite some time. There are many things that are broken that need to be fixed, and LD 40 addresses them. We need this legislation to pass for a number of reasons; I'll hone in on some here.

For one, the importance of clarifying the authorized conduct of a caregiver, as highlighted in OCP's rulemaking, is paramount for the proper functioning of the cannabis industry. LD 40 addresses this need by introducing fixes that not only align with but also solidify the status quo of industry operations. By providing explicit guidance on the permissible actions and responsibilities of caregivers, LD 40 aims to bring clarity and coherence to a regulatory landscape that has often been subject to interpretation. These amendments not only serve to enhance the understanding of caregivers' roles but also contribute to a more stable and predictable environment for both industry participants and regulatory bodies, fostering a framework that supports responsible and effective caregiving practices within the cannabis sector.

Additionally, having to carry individual ID cards for cannabis jobs is just plain ridiculous. I mean, in what other job do you have to carry around a special ID card? It's not the norm, and it just makes things unnecessarily complicated. These cards don't really serve any real purpose, and they definitely don't make the public safer. It's like adding an extra layer for no good reason. Let's keep things simple and in line with common sense regulation.

I have kids, and I can tell you that age restrictions in the cannabis industry is imperative for maintaining regulatory integrity and safeguarding public health, but we're doing it wrong. It is definitely paramount that licensees or their representatives refrain from selling or delivering cannabis products to individuals under 21, but that doesn't mean I should have to card a senior citizen. The fix in LD 40 mirrors the stringent age verification practices observed in the alcohol industry, reflecting a commitment to consistency and responsible regulation. By adopting this approach, we prioritize the well-being of our communities and uphold standards that are synonymous with those applied to other controlled substances.

Overall, the imperative to expunge the stigma associated with cannabis within legal frameworks as embodied by LD 40, underscores a commitment to fairness and impartiality. This legislative proposal advocates for a recalibration of existing regulations, not as a plea for preferential treatment, but as an earnest plea for equitable treatment. Aligning the legal landscape governing cannabis with the standards applicable to other industries is paramount. LD 40, in essence, seeks to rectify historical biases and foster a regulatory environment reflective of contemporary attitudes toward cannabis, thus heralding a more egalitarian and just approach in the eyes of the law.

Thank you very much.

Don Ellis