

Sheri Withers  
Lewiston  
LD 40

Hello Chairs Hickman & Supica and members of VLA,

My name is Sheri Withers. I own and operate a business outside of the cannabis industry, and I support this legislation for the following reasons:

The need for clarity in the roles and responsibilities of caregivers is critical. LD 40 offers hope by proposing changes that not only align with our current practices but also strengthen them. Caregivers I know strive to maintain the businesses and lives they've worked hard to build, but the lack of clarity for the future is concerning for them. LD 40's aim to clearly define permissible actions brings a sense of relief, offering a clearer path forward. These amendments not only improve understanding of what's expected, but also create a more stable and predictable environment for caregivers.

In scrutinizing the policy landscape of the cannabis industry, one discerns a disconcerting practice – the disqualification of individuals predicated on historical drug offenses. This measure underscores a reluctance to evolve beyond stigmatizing paradigms. It is imperative to recognize that such policies not only stand in contradiction to contemporary principles of justice and fairness but also perpetuate an unwarranted bias. Consequently, advocating for the elimination of this discriminatory practice within the cannabis sector is not merely a step towards progress; it is a commitment to cultivating an industry characterized by equity, devoid of the shadows cast by anachronistic convictions.

The prevailing advertising regulations within the cannabis industry are marked by intricacies and ambiguity, rendering a challenging landscape for businesses seeking to promote their products. In contrast to more established industries with clear and permissive advertising standards, the cannabis sector contends with restrictive and subjective guidelines. LD 40 represents a judicious proposal to bring coherence and transparency to cannabis advertising laws, aligning them with the standards observed in analogous industries like alcohol. By mitigating the complexities and fostering a balance between responsibility and creative expression, this amendment stands poised to usher in an era where cannabis businesses can engage with their audience unencumbered by the current perplexities that stifle effective communication.

Mothers should have the freedom to bring their children into cannabis stores, just as they do in other retail establishments. Restricting access to individuals with children perpetuates an unnecessary stigma surrounding the cannabis industry, treating it differently than other legal businesses. It seems absurd that mothers can freely enter liquor stores, pharmacies, and even medical dispensaries with their children, yet not enter a recreational cannabis retail location. Removing such limitations not only aligns with the principles of fairness but also contributes to normalizing the perception of cannabis as a legal and regulated product rather than one associated with unwarranted restrictions.

Please pass LD 40.

Best regards,  
Sheri