

Emily Little
Turner
LD 40

Subject: Testimony in Support of LD 40 - Addressing Cannabis Stigma and Promoting Equity Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, I wholeheartedly support the proposed language in §104 and §104-A of the legislation. Recognizing cannabis as a major industry contributing significantly to the state's economy is a progressive step, acknowledging its potential for economic and community development. The formal establishment of OCP in the way it is written demonstrates a commitment to sensible regulation and the well-being of the people. The emphasis on preserving the viability of small cannabis family farms and businesses, particularly in rural areas, is commendable. The outlined duties of the director prioritize the fair and equitable administration of laws, emphasizing the importance of consistent interpretation and enforcement. Prioritizing patient access to medical cannabis and fostering good-faith partnerships with stakeholders further underscores the comprehensive and balanced approach this legislation aims to achieve. Passage of this language is crucial in fostering a well-regulated, stigma-free, and economically beneficial cannabis industry in the state. Ensuring accountability and transparency in the regulatory process is paramount, particularly when it comes to shaping the rules governing the cannabis industry. Requiring all rulemaking by the Office of Cannabis Policy to pass through the legislature is a necessary step to uphold democratic principles. This approach ensures that any major substantive changes proposed by the OCP receive thorough legislative scrutiny, preventing unchecked regulatory authority. By subjecting OCP rulemaking to legislative review, we establish a more inclusive and democratic decision-making process, aligning with the broader principles of representative governance. This measure not only safeguards against potential overreach but also fosters a system where regulatory decisions are collectively considered and endorsed by elected representatives. The requirement for cannabis businesses to substantiate compliance with laws from unrelated agencies to OCP appears superfluous and imposes an unwarranted administrative burden. OCP's mandate should ideally be confined to matters directly within the purview of cannabis regulation. Demanding proof of adherence to unrelated laws from other agencies introduces an extraneous layer of complexity and bureaucratic intricacy. This approach not only diverts essential resources but also blurs the delineation of regulatory jurisdictions. These laws are already enforceable by the relevant agencies. The way age verification is laid out in LD 40 aligns with the current practice upheld in the alcohol sector. The requirement that licensees or their representatives verify the age of individuals under 27 through reliable photographic identification, containing the person's date of birth, is a fundamental measure for maintaining regulatory coherence. This approach safeguards against the sale or delivery of cannabis products to minors and upholds a standardized procedure similar to that in place for other controlled substances. It underscores the industry's commitment to consistency and responsible practices without going over the top and having to card 80 year olds. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please vote yes on LD 40. Sincerely,
Emily Little