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LD 104

As each state develops its commercial marijuana market according to the will of its constituents, late adopters like Maine would be wise to study the early adopters—states like Michigan, California, and Oregon. Learn from their successes, but more importantly, from their mistakes. This is what responsible, effective governance looks like—and it's free insight from your neighbors.

Start by asking the producers and sellers in those states if they believe METRC has improved public safety. Ask if their state-mandated testing labs are still trusted. Ask whether hospitals were flooded with victims of “bad actors” before track-and-trace systems were implemented. Because if those dangers were real, we would have heard about them long before legalization.

In states that have adopted systems like METRC, “lab shopping” is rampant. Dishonest labs that pass questionable product flourish, while honest labs go out of business. Why? Because when your competition is using a lab that always gives a pass—even if it means ignoring pesticide use or falsifying potency—you're left with a choice: cheat or lose. And once a Certificate of Analysis (COA) is issued, do you really think anyone checks twice? The jar says “state tested.” But that Eagle 20 pesticide is still in the flower—systemically. METRC and the lab gave it the green light.

Testing doesn't guarantee a safe shelf. If it did, we wouldn't have product recalls years into a “safe and regulated” system. Track-and-trace doesn't stop out-of-state product from hitting in-state shelves either. METRC is the largest cannabis tracking system in the world, with over a decade of experience, and yet, flower from METRC-tagged grows in the West is flowing to the East Coast—including Maine—at this very moment.

And according to former METRC insiders, the company is fully aware of this diversion and actively conceals it from the very regulators who fund them.

If you think this system will prevent diversion or protect public safety, I have a track-and-trace system to sell you.

Let's not forget: Maine installed John Hudak as the Director of the Office of Cannabis Management—one of the very people previously employed by METRC's lobbying firm. And now Maine is preparing to expand METRC's contract through legislation? This isn't governance. This is regulatory capture.

To be clear: Maine is handing expanded authority—and potentially millions of public dollars—to a private company whose lobbyists are writing the rules.

METRC doesn't make marijuana safer. It creates cover for fraud, for pesticide use, and for backdoor distribution. Ask Brian Hanna, Director of Michigan's Cannabis Regulatory Agency, how he feels about METRC. He's critical—because he wasn't hired by METRC's lawyers to secure a contract. John Hudak was.

METRC is a scam. Its plastic tags cost cultivators hundreds of millions annually while generating waste. Its software is clunky, unreliable, and would never meet compliance standards in even a modest medical office.

There is no pile of bodies from untested cannabis. There is no cartel at the farmers market. And the racist boogeyman of “Chinese grows” has no place in this debate. This fearmongering is an embarrassing, transparent attempt to hand market control to a Florida-based private company under the guise of public safety.

Maine doesn't need METRC. It doesn't need TYMC testing. It needs common sense. If you want tracking, use barcodes that farmers can generate themselves. If you want testing, let your Department of Agriculture handle it—they'll do a better job and keep the money in-state.

Ask yourselves:

- Who benefits from making METRC mandatory?
- Do other regulators even value METRC?
- When did John Hudak and Lewis Koski—his former colleague at METRC’s lobbying firm—last meet for a taxpayer-funded dinner?

Koski, by the way, now works as an executive at METRC. This isn’t oversight. It’s a heist.

Do not pass this bill. It hasn’t worked in other states. Why would it work in Maine?