

**Testimony of Lani Graham, MD, MPH, Freeport, Maine  
In Support of LD 1847 & LD 104**

**An Act to Institute Testing and Tracking of Medical Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products Similar to Adult Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products, dedicate a Portion of the Adult Use Cannabis Sales and Excise Tax to Medical Use Cannabis Programs and Create a Study Group (1847)**

**An Act to Protect the Health of Medical Cannabis Patients and Streamline the Mandatory Testing of Cannabis (104)**

**Presented by Rep. Graham (LD 1847) and Rep. Malon (LD 104)**

**Before the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, May 5, 2025**

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Veterans and Legal affairs Committee, my name is Lani Graham. I am a physician, a public health expert, a member of the Maine Medical Association's Public Health Committee in support of LD's 1847 % 104. Maine people and particularly Maine children need all these bills right now. In fact, we are late in addressing this issue and it is highly likely that some Mainers have already suffered as a result, but if you act now, others will be protected.

I wish I had time to describe all the recent medical research on Cannabis, and you had time to listen. Once you understood fully the dangers of how medical cannabis is currently being marketed in Maine, you would have no hesitation in passing this bill. But since neither is true, I will confine myself to two aspects, mandating testing for contaminants and establishing a potency cap.

Mandating testing for contaminants in a product that is being sold to improve the health of users, especially children should be a "no brainer". Imagine yourself a parent buying a product for the better health of your child. Wouldn't you want to feel confident that the medication you were giving your child was not contaminated with a pesticide, lead, or mold? The first guidance for health care personnel is "first do no harm."

The second issue of major concern is potency. Over the last several decades, the THC content of cannabis has changed substantially. In 1995, the average THC content in cannabis seized by the Drug Enforcement Administration was about 4%. By 2017, it had risen to 17% and continues to increase. Beyond the plant, a large array of other cannabis products with even higher THC content like dabs, oils, and edibles are readily available—some as high as 90%.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/not-your-grandmothers-marijuana-rising-thc-concentrations-in-cannabis-can-pose-devastating-health-risks/>

As the potency increases, potential adverse impacts also increase, particularly for the young. New research over the past few decades has also shown that young brains are not fully developed until about age of 25.<sup>2</sup> This fact makes young users particularly vulnerable to Cannabis use. There is compelling data showing that cannabis may be associated with changes in brain structure in young people, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, which is associated with decision-making and executive function.<sup>3</sup> So, once again, without tests for potency, in addition to hoping for better health, buyers are purchasing a lottery ticket that may have unexpected and severe adverse health effects.

Many people who voted for legalization and access to medical properties likely thought they were voting for the marijuana of the 1960s to 1980s when the THC content was even less than 4%. And tragically, many of us in public health, thought that as well and were focused elsewhere, allowing Mainers to be at higher risk than users of this product in other states. Now we have an opportunity to rectify some of our mistakes and begin a serious consideration of this drug.

I hope you will support these bills unanimously. Maine people, Maine children, are counting on you.

Thank you for your attention. I would be glad to answer any questions you might have.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00627/full>

<sup>3</sup> <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/not-your-grandmothers-marijuana-rising-thc-concentrations-in-cannabis-can-pose-devastating-health-risks/>