

Julie Daigle
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LD 104

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Julie Daigle and I live in Cross Lake Township. I'm a substance use prevention specialist and have been in this field for over 10 years. I'm testifying in favor of LD 104 and LD 1847, which would require testing and tracking in Maine's Medical Cannabis Program and prioritize efforts to reduce youth cannabis use.

It is hard to believe that out of more than 30 of states with medical cannabis programs, Maine is the only one that does not require testing for contaminants like heavy metals, pesticides, or mold. It's also alarming that the 2023 Maine Office of Cannabis Policy's report of Harmful Contaminants in Maine's Medical Cannabis Program states that 42% of medical cannabis tested had at least one contaminant that would have failed testing in the Adult Use Cannabis Program.

We have passed laws that say that cannabis has a role as a medicine, including for young people- a lack of testing for a medical product makes no sense. It puts at risk the people who are using cannabis to manage medical conditions and is grossly unfair to parents who are trying to make the best decisions they can for their children.

Another discrepancy between the Medical Cannabis program and the Adult Use Program is around cannabis potency. Research shows that using higher potency cannabis can increase the risk of depression and even schizophrenia. Adolescents whose brains are still developing are at even more risk. Please also consider that, without a cap on the THC content of edibles in the Medical Cannabis Program, there is an increased the risk of accidental overconsumption, something that harms children and pets too.

Too many people believe that because cannabis is a plant, it is free from harmful efforts. They also do not truly understand the role that the government plays in ensuring the safety of all of our citizens, or that without this testing, their freedom from unknown contaminants is at risk. I respectfully request you to vote LD 1847 and LD 104 "Ought to Pass" to help ensure transparency and safety in Maine's Medical Cannabis Program. It's long overdue and this is a key part of government responsibility. Thank you.