

Alex Stewart  
Winn  
LD 104

Good afternoon members of the VLA - my name is Alex Stewart, and I am the owner and sole operator of Hash River Farms located up in the town of Winn. I moved to Winn over two years ago with the sole intention to start this business. Prior to this, I was cultivating for personal use in New Jersey. Learning to grow cannabis and make hash led to a profound change in my life, which in turn motivated me to make cannabis the center of my life.

I decided to start a business and share my passion with others. I knew this wouldn't be feasible in New Jersey. Like many states, New Jersey's regulations require more than a million dollars in startup capital which is inaccessible to me. So, I sat down and reviewed my options for what state I could move to in order to start this venture. It quickly became clear that Maine was the only choice for me from a regulatory perspective.

Since moving to Maine, I have learned many interesting and unique things about this state. I am here today asking you to oppose LD 104 and LD 1847 in order to maintain one unique aspect of this state. Maine stands alone as an environment that encourages entrepreneurship in the cannabis space. The regulatory environment that you have created encourages passionate people like myself to come and invest in this state. Making the proposed changes in these bills will stifle this impulse, without any actual benefit to the Maine cannabis market or its patients. I urge you to vote no on these bills. Thank you for your time.