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Warren
LD 1897
May 5, 2025
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Testimony in Support of LD 1897 – An Act To Amend the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act and the Cannabis Legalization Act

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs:

My name is Arleigh Kraus, and I am writing to express strong support for LD 1897, a bill that takes meaningful steps to improve both the medical and adult use cannabis programs in Maine. This legislation demonstrates a thoughtful approach to supporting small-scale cultivators, promoting sustainable practices, reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens, and honoring the spirit of voter-approved cannabis policy.

By formally defining “sun-grown cultivators” in the medical program and “sun-grown cultivation” in the adult use program, the bill takes a significant step toward legitimizing and promoting outdoor cannabis cultivation. Sun-grown cannabis is environmentally sustainable, energy-efficient, and particularly well-suited for Maine’s seasonal climate. Increasing allowable plant counts and canopy space for these cultivators creates much-needed equity for small, outdoor growers who often face structural disadvantages compared to indoor operations.

Establishing clear requirements for outdoor cultivation within the medical program enhances accountability while preserving access. Rather than penalizing caregivers who choose to grow outdoors, this bill supports their efforts with a clear regulatory framework, ensuring quality control and environmental stewardship without unnecessary red tape.

Allowing a 30-day grace period for new employees, assistants, and contractors to work after submitting an application for an individual identification card is a pragmatic change. This provision alleviates staffing delays that hurt operations, especially during peak cultivation and harvest seasons, without compromising the security and integrity of the program.

The repeal of the prohibition on cannabis collectives in the medical program restores the community-based origins of medical cannabis in Maine. Allowing caregivers to collaborate in a legal and transparent manner benefits patients through shared resources, enhanced expertise, and improved access to diverse and high-quality medicine.

The repeal of the mandatory yeast and mold testing requirement for adult use cannabis products eliminates an overly burdensome mandate that disproportionately affects small producers. This change aligns testing protocols with real-world risk levels while maintaining essential health and safety standards.

In conclusion, LD1897 strengthens Maine’s cannabis framework by supporting sustainability, flexibility, fairness, and patient access. It uplifts small growers, enhances workforce practicality, and removes barriers that serve no clear public interest. I urge the Committee to support this commonsense, forward-looking legislation and vote “Ought to Pass.”

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,
Arleigh Kraus