

Duncan Markovich  
Better Ways LLC  
LD 1847

Good afternoon Chairs Hickman and Supica and to the esteemed members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee,

My name is Duncan Markovich, owner and founder of Better Ways, a cannabis therapeutics, education, and community center in my hometown of Branford, CT.

I have been proudly working with this plant for over 20 years and it is a privilege not a right to work in this community and industry.

There are many bills up for discussion today but I would like to emphasize my opposition for LD 104 and 1847.

Education is the key to all things so I hope this committee hears some words of concern from your sister state here on the east coast. I want to be very clear; I am for clean and safe cannabis for all but that should be defined by the patients and scientists, not corporations.

So let's get right to the elephants in the room; the stigma of recreational vs medical use, track and trace programs, testing standards, safety levels, and remediation.

Sensationalizing these concerns can be viewed as gate keeping in this industry and the actual science behind this plant must support and drive public policy.

Cannabis use, whether recreational in intent or not, is medicinal. The users' experience is also highly individualized and subjective. I use cannabis daily for pain management and nerve damage and I require high THC potency products for my relief.

High THC potency products are essential for medical cannabis patients, THC caps and product type restrictions ultimately harm the credibility of a state's medical program and lead to the reduction of active medical patients or they simply leave to go to other states.

Trust me I know because you are receiving many of CT's failed medical patients looking for relief and I fear any changes to your current program made in haste may leave them and many from other states without any options.

Coming from a state that has one of the highest allowable limits of mold and bacteria in its medical cannabis program in the country,  $10^4$  CFUs and only one state approved testing facility, I can assure you that just because there's a framework of mandatory testing, the facade of safe or safer cannabis to patients and consumers is one of the greater ethical dilemmas with this evolving industry.

After all the recent controversy of conflicts of interest between METRC, the Director of OCP, and the recently exposed METRC inversion fraud by ex- executive and whistleblower Marcus Estes, I am very surprised that this track and trace program is even a consideration right now.

Moving forward with these two bills will absolutely have negative impacts to the trust in Maine's cannabis program, its operators, your culture and ultimately the patients and the very community that is supposed to be served and respected.

When it comes to safety and testing standards, I suggest this committee look towards Tess Eidem's work from Colorado, she is a leading PhD Microbiologist and conducts Aerobiological Research specifically for Cannabis Quality and Safety. Much of her research underscores the technical complexities of indoor cannabis cultivation in the industry today.

The existence of LD 1567 and the requirement for remediation labeling illustrates this very dilemma. Why are we allowing growing practices that lead to the need for remediation in the first place? No cannabis that needs to be remediated should ever be available on shelves. This is a major slap in the face to the plant and the patients it serves.

True medicinal grade cannabis never needs to be remediated and once this plant undergoes these processes, the terpene and cannabinoid efficacy is compromised to a degree that the medicinal properties on the plant material is significantly negatively impacted.

In my opinion, remediating cannabis means you don't know what you are doing in this industry, or worse, you don't care to improve and rely on remediation techniques in order to pass testing to simply get products into the market. This creates an equal liability to the progression of this plant and industry and other public safety issues.

As always, I welcome any questions or comments from this committee and I continue to echo the sentiment for us all, FREE THE PLANT AND FREE THE PEOPLE.

Respectfully,

Duncan Markovich – Branford, CT

Owner and Founder - Better Ways LLC, A Cannabis Education and Community Center

CT Cannawarriors, CT Shoreline Chamber of Commerce Member

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