



Testimony of Whitney A Parrish Perry

American Heart Association

In Opposition to LD 1365

An Act to Allow Adult Use Cannabis Stores to Operate Cannabis Consumption Lounges

[Amended Title]

May 8, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments on this bill. My name is Whitney Parrish Perry, and I am the Government Relations Director for the American Heart Association (AHA)—the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, and whose mission is to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

We are writing in opposition to LD 1365, “*An Act to Allow Adult Use Cannabis Stores to Operate Cannabis Consumption Lounges.*”

Maine has strong, comprehensive smoke-free laws, including provisions that prohibit smoking in workplaces. Across Maine and the country, the American Heart Association has long advocated to ensure smoke-free workplaces for all employees in all industries, recognizing that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The scientific evidence is clear on this: **secondhand smoke causes serious diseases like heart disease, lung disease, and cancer, as well as premature death among nonsmokers**. It is toxic and dangerous, and it is responsible for more than 41,000 deaths annually in the U.S. alone, including nearly 34,000 deaths from heart disease.

That’s why Maine was a leader in ensuring that all workplaces and public places were smoke-free. We now look for you to ensure that we are not rolling back our smoke-free public places law.



Research shows that particulate levels from secondhand cannabis smoke are higher than tobacco smoke.¹ Secondhand cannabis smoke also contains many of the same toxins and carcinogens² found in directly inhaled cannabis smoke. The average PM2.5 emission rate of pre-rolled cannabis flower is 3.5 times the average emission rate of Marlboro tobacco cigarettes. Exposure to fine particulate matter can cause cardiovascular disease, lung irritation, asthma attacks, and makes respiratory infections more likely.

Smoking cannabis in indoor spaces exposes the public and workers to dangerous secondhand smoke emissions. The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the entity that sets standards for ventilation rates that are widely adopted as industry norms, has made it clear that **no technology or engineering solution can make indoor smoking safe.**³ We also know that lost productivity caused by diseases that result from secondhand smoke exposure is estimated at \$5 billion every year.

The American Heart Association is committed to creating a world of longer, healthier lives. We believe that everyone who lives in or visits our state should have the right to breathe clean air—that when people live and work in spaces that are smoke-free, they can breathe easier knowing that they are not being exposed to the diseases and risks that come with secondhand smoke. **Maintaining strong smoke-free guidelines and keeping secondhand smoke out of the workplace will help keep all of us healthier and safer.**

We urge the committee to vote *Ought Not to Pass* on LD 1365, in both original and amended form. Thank you for your time, attention, and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions about this testimony.

Respectfully,

¹ Moir, Rickett, et al. *A comparison of mainstream and sidestream marijuana and tobacco cigarette smoke produced under two machine smoking conditions*. Accessed at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18062674/>

² Ott, Zhao, et al. *Measuring indoor fine particle concentrations, emission rates, and decay rates from cannabis use in a residence*. Accessed at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S259016212100006X>

³ American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers. Addenda to Standard 62.1. Accessed at: <https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/standards-and-guidelines/standards-addenda/addenda-to-standard-62-1-2016>



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