

Susan Meehan

Testimony in favor of LD 978

Good afternoon Senator Craig Hickman and Representative Laura Supica and honorable members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Susan Meehan. I am a registered identification cardholder and a patient in Maine's Medical Use of Cannabis Program and a parent of the late minor patient, Cyndimae. I fear that predatory regulatory practices, sudden loss of access to banking in May 2021 and a general mistrust of the regulating agency has contributed to loss of over 1000 caregivers in Maine over the past year.

Cyndimae and I came from a state in which pediatric medical use of cannabis was excluded from the medical use on passage. Connecticut was one of only two states to exclude the kids - Delaware was the other. We and many other parents and children sat through a legislator's disrespectful filibuster in the Connecticut legislature as the bill dies in the wee hours of Connecticut's session in 2012. That legislature was primaried out of office during the next election (Boucher). Connecticut eventually passed pediatric use after a long Department of Health hearing on March 9th, 2016 where Cyndimae walked and talked along my side. Cyndimae died in her sleep 4 days later, and the law was posthumously named the Cyndimae Law when the governor signed it in October 2016.

Why does the Industry in Maine feel that the Office of Cannabis Policy requires Legislative oversight?

Historically, attempted versions of rules proposed by OCP for the Medical Use of Cannabis Program have been co-authored by folks such as the consulting firm founded by Freedman, Koski and Hudak, and have been fine examples of how to regulate Maine's small businesses out of business. In Maine over 56% of the working population are employed by small businesses, and the alignment of the regulating agency continues to be with the very large corporations that dominant nearly every market except Maine, Washington state, and to some extent Oklahoma. These large corporations are aligned with companies like Atria and Coors and stand to profit to the tune of over \$3 billion dollars upon federal legalization. This is big money and a big scramble for market control via state by state government control.

Maine Medical has year after year resisted market control by the company founded by Freedman, Koski and Hudak, Metrc. Maine's adult use program would be smart to follow Maine Medical in supporting a tracking program like Washington state's in house developed tracking. The OCP has been directed statutorily (Title 22, Chapter 558C, subchapter 2430-G, B) to do so, but continues to promote Metrc. Perhaps a Department and stakeholder inexpensive zoom trip to Washington state is in order. Maine's adult use stakeholders ought to listen in on this. Tracking can effectively be accomplished without buying into Metrc.

So, in short, I support this proposed oversight of rulemaking in Maine's Medical Use of Cannabis Program to prevent any sort of regulatory capture promoted by either big business or program stakeholders. We implore that the legislature provide protection for the public, the many small businesses encompassed by Maines program, and the nearly 10% of Maine's voting population that hold patient identification cards in the program.

Please deem ld 978 ought to pass. Thank you to the bill sponsor, Representative Lynne Williams. Thank you to the VLA for hosting this hearing.

Susan Meehan 207-861-1945 goldenwolf458@gmail.com