

Arleigh A Kraus
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LD1819 An Act to Create the Maine Medical Cannabis Advisory Commission and the Medical Cannabis Alternative Health Board

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, my name is Arleigh Kraus. I am a registered cannabis caregiver with a B.S. in biochemistry, an organic farmer, and business owner in Warren. I am a founding member of the Maine Craft Cannabis Association, a member of Seed2Health Learning Health Alliance, a board member of Medical Marijuana Caregivers of Maine, the Chair of the Adult and Medical Cannabis Committee for the Town of Warren, and I am a founding member of the Cannabis Council of Maine. I have been a caregiver in Maine for over 10 years.

I am part of a group currently engaged in cannabis research here in Maine which is self funded. Topics of our work include all matters relating to cannabis. We are scientists, anthropologists, doctors, patients, engineers. Together we want to learn and understand what is working and what is not for both the cannabis plant and personal health.

For example one area of plant health we have been studying is uptake and sources of heavy metals in cannabis. There are multiple variables which affect heavy metal concentration in cannabis and this is something we as a group are interested in learning more about. Heavy metals include cadmium, arsenic, lead, cobalt and others. Heavy metals may be acceptable in products of one mode of use but not another. Fertilizers and products which are regarded as safe for use on crops such as spinach or strawberries may cause extreme hyperaccumulation of metals in cannabis. This is an example of one area of research being done currently in the state by Seed2Health. This is work which benefits all; from the patient to the cultivator.

The funding which has already been promised for medical cannabis research and is in statute should be accessible to those who are working to study and learn more about this valuable plant.

Encouraging innovation and discoveries in cannabis science can be helped along by the passing of this bill. What we do not need or want is research being captured by only pharmaceutical companies, universities, or giant corporations. While there is a place for research to be conducted by these organizations we must create space for innovators here in the state to discover, learn, and report findings.

Opening up finances for medical cannabis research will help all patients and program participants and uses funds already decreed by law for this purpose.

I urge you to vote to pass this bill.

Respectfully,

Arleigh Kraus