

Pat Smalls, Fire of Fore, Member of the Cannabis Guild of Maine

LD 2147

Chairman Hickman, Chairwoman Supica, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, my name is Patrick Small, I'm a resident of Old Orchard Beach, and I'm here to testify in support of LD 2147, An Act to Remove the Requirement for Edible Cannabis Products to Be Stamped or Embossed on Each Serving with a Universal Symbol. I'm testifying today on behalf of Fire on Fore, which is a retail store in Portland's Old Port, and as a member of the newly formed Cannabis Guild of Maine.

The Cannabis Guild of Maine is an organization of responsible cannabis-related business owners who are committed to the long-term success of the industry. Our membership is comprised of retail store operators, cultivators, and product manufacturers in both the adult use and medical market. Our mission is to advocate for a sustainable regulatory framework for Maine's largest agricultural industry.

I'm here today in support of this proposal because I'm the general manager of a retail store that regularly stocks the edible products in question. My argument is simple-Maine voters have decided that cannabis is to be a legal product in commerce for people age 21 and above. I understand that cannabis will not be regulated like all other products, but we I do feel that this requirement is cumbersome, and at times impossible.

In addition to the labels placed on every product we sell, each purchase made from our stores requires an exit bag that is child-resistant, tamper-evident, and opaque, with a label that includes the following:

- Name and contact information of the dispensary
- Name of the product
- Net weight or volume of the contents
- Date of sale

This requirement is built into our cost structures and one with which we are able to readily comply. However, the requirement that each individual unit inside that package be embossed with a special indicium for cannabis products is a very different regulation that can make compliance difficult. We appreciate the legislative intent and the duty of the Office of Cannabis Policy to ensure public safety. But we believe an appropriate balance can be struck. Let me explain.

Our company does not manufacture edible products, we are a retail reseller in Portland and Old Orchard Beach. However, if an edible product leaves our store without this indicia on every single unit, we are held liable for that failure to comply. This would be analogous to requiring the manufacturers of Tidepods to include a warning on every individual detergent pod that these units are not safe to eat--at a certain point, the consumer has to have some responsibility for the safe storage of products and to educate children that some items are not for their consumption. The same holds true for prescription medication in the household, alcohol, or household cleaning chemicals.

I appreciate your time today, and I'd be happy to work with the committee, as well as the Office of Cannabis Policy to identify any changes to make this a workable bill within Maine's regulatory structure. Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

