



Maine Medical  
Association



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
AND  
THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION  
AND  
THE MAINE CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS  
AND  
THE MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
  
IN SUPPORT OF**

**LD 1996, An Act to Regulate Synthetic Hemp-derived Cannabinoids**

Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
Room 214, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. My name is Anne Sedlack, and I am the Director of Advocacy for the Maine Medical Association. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1996, An Act to Regulate Synthetic Hemp-derived Cannabinoids on behalf of the Maine Medical Association, the Maine Osteopathic Association, the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Maine Public Health Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State. The Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MAAP) is a professional membership organization representing 250 pediatricians and subspecialists who are dedicated to fulfilling the Chapter's mission: to improve the lives of children and adolescents in Maine. The Maine Public Health Association (MPHA) is the state's oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals, and represents more than 700 individual members and 60 organizations across the state. MPHA works to optimize the health of people and places in Maine through advocacy, education, partnerships, and public health workforce development.

This year MMA and MOA's legislative committees have joined together to advocate from one voice. We are joined by our partners, MAAP and MPHA, on this testimony. We all have determined that it is important to testify in support of LD 1996 and the amendment proposed by Senator Pierce for a number of reasons.

First, as a general principle, we are concerned about the risk that unregulated products pose to the public. As we understand it, the synthetic intoxicating hemp derived cannabinoids as a whole are not tracked, tested or age-restricted. It is the job of the State to ensure that the public is safe and so we are so appreciative of Senator Pierce's move to place guardrails on this particular market. We would encourage that this study includes all synthetic intoxicating hemp derived cannabinoids so we can ensure we are keeping the public safe.

Second, we are particularly concerned about these products not being age-restricted. This means that any young person, no matter their age, can walk into a convenience store and purchase one of these products, which are intoxicating and potentially harmful. This is a problem that needs to be resolved immediately, which is why we are grateful for the moratorium.

Finally, we want to recognize the burden that regulation places on small businesses in this State. However, the specific needs/wants of individual businesses should never substantially outweigh consumer health and safety.

We are grateful for Senator Pierce's proposed amendment, which would turn this bill into a study to determine what regulations are needed and would ban these products until the study is completed. We would encourage members to ensure that this study is funded because this work needs to happen. We would also ask that the moratorium be put into place even if the study isn't funded.

We want to be clear - we are not saying that we will never support some form of these products. However, it needs to be studied and regulated if we are allowing the public to consume it.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physician and public health communities about LD 1996. We urge an "ought to pass as amended" vote on this bill. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Anne Sedlack, Esq., M.S.W.  
Director of Advocacy, Maine Medical Association