



# Maine Credit Union League

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In Opposition to  
**LD 1314: An Act to Protect Cannabis' Workers Access to Personal Credit**  
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
*April 23, 2025*

Good Afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

My name is Krista Simonis and I am the Director of Governmental Affairs at the Maine Credit Union League. The Maine Credit Union League is the trade association for Maine's 48 credit unions and over 750,000 members statewide. We respectfully submit the following testimony **in opposition to LD 1314.**

We are sympathetic to the needs of the cannabis community and acknowledge that being denied access to banking services for using a product that is legal at the state level is challenging and frustrating. Further, we appreciate that there is an attempt in LD 1314 to provide an exception for federal law. However, the bill itself conflicts with federal law and may force credit unions who do not currently engage in cannabis banking to do so.

For federally chartered credit unions, all authority to operate is derived from federal law. Until SAFE banking is passed, there is always the risk that any credit union offering banking services could be seen as participating in and furthering illegal activity. This would include providing credit.

Most credit unions offering cannabis banking are state chartered. Since cannabis is illegal at the federal level, any credit union choosing to bank cannabis must maintain strict records. It is an intensive endeavor that requires credit unions to know their customers and be able to match every dollar to transaction records provided by the business. Credit unions that have cannabis accounts must have dedicated staff that oversee those accounts, which is an expense that not all credit unions can afford. In addition, Visa and Mastercard prohibit the use of their card networks to process transactions related to cannabis. This prohibition limits the ability of local financial institutions to offer a credit product using Visa or Mastercard to owners, employees, and caregivers.

LD 1314's prohibition on denying credit applications to those in the cannabis industry challenges our industry's autonomy and may force us into credit decisions that are risky and would otherwise be untenable. Many CUs will lend to employees of cannabis businesses if the employee can show that they have a job. But for some employees who are paid in cash, this might be difficult to authenticate because they don't have pay stubs etc.

A credit unions' decision to offer cannabis banking is not taken lightly. The issue is well researched and deliberated carefully by the credit union staff and board of directors prior to adoption. Typically, it must be approved by the board and a contingency plan must be in place should banking cannabis businesses no longer be allowed by federal regulators. An overwhelming majority of credit unions in our state have determined that cannabis accounts

are not right for them at this time. The League worries that this bill will undermine and erode the credit unions' right to self-determination.

The League would like to thank the bill sponsors and the proponents of LD 1314 for their honest attempt to try improving this important financial challenge. The League and our member credit unions will continue to advocate and work with interested parties to try address these needs as best we can. However, the most viable solution is action at the federal level, and for now we must urge the committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1314.