



To The Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**LD 104 AND LD 1847 OUGHT NOT TO PASS**

Distinguished chairs and members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Mark Barnett. I am a resident of Auburn, the Policy Director for the Maine Craft Cannabis Association (MCCA), and the owner of an Adult Use Retail store in Portland. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the MCCA. We urge this committee to vote 'Ought Not to Pass' on LD 1847 and LD 104, which both attempt to copy and paste the unscientific, anti-small business and anti-consumer policies of our flailing Adult Use market into our Medical market.

These bills nakedly represents the priorities of large, well-capitalized and largely out-of-state corporate cannabis companies who can't compete with the quality of Maine's craft growers, and each would bring irreparable harm to the Maine economy and to Maine's cannabis consumers, who gladly partake in the Medical Use of Cannabis Program as it is currently constituted. Nothing in these bills has been driven by consumer complaints or documented health issues. We reject the notion that Maine's medical cannabis is making its consumers 'unhealthy'. Quite the contrary, sales from the Medical program demonstrate how successful it has been in meeting the needs of its participants, who receive their certifications to access medical cannabis from health professionals and who continue to choose this market over the more-expensive, over-regulated and frankly unsuccessful Adult Use market here in Maine.

The medical market offers vastly more patient choice which, particularly for patients utilizing unique cannabis and cannabis preparations, is an essential part of their personal wellness regimen. What is the rationale behind taking that all away? It's worth noting that LD 1847 also introduces an arbitrary limit on THC potency per product and per package, copied from the arbitrary figures built into Adult Use statute. Having participated in both retail markets, I can assure you that the potency limits in Adult Use are one of the highest hurdles to adoption of Adult Use products, as these numbers are not driven by any evidence-based research and don't reflect the way that many folks already utilize cannabis. Cannabis is not alcohol—it is not toxic, it is not poison, and Mainers can be trusted to regulate their own intake of specific cannabis compounds.

We highlight for the Committee that of the over \$555 million (December figures incomplete) in sales generated in 2024 by the two programs, the Medical market outsold the Adult Use market despite much lower average prices and the requirement to obtain a medical professional's approval to purchase from the program. It is well known that much of the Adult Use market is driven by tourists to our state, which is all well and good—I myself operate a store in a tourist-heavy area and participate in the Adult Use program as a retailer. But Maine residents are clearly selecting the Medical market by a large margin, all of this despite the unfounded propaganda espoused by our own Office of Cannabis Policy attacking the integrity of the program and its participants. The proof is in the pudding—Mainers are making their choices. We urge you not to foist massive new costs on Maine's medical cannabis businesses and their consumers by copying and pasting our floundering Adult Use program's 'mandatory testing' and 'track and trace' into the Medical program, thereby robbing them of the choices they are currently freely making.



The Adult Use program has much higher barriers to entry, ridiculous supply chain pain points that make many product categories impossible, and a mess of paperwork requirements, primarily caused by these two interwoven regulatory systems. The program is riddled throughout with anti-cannabis stigma. It is so poorly-designed that every session, numerous bills are filed to address not only the obvious glaring problems but also the absurd minutiae that the Adult use statute contains, the likes of which cannot be found in the regulation of nearly any other industry. It is performing at roughly half the level it was forecast to at the launch of the market, largely due to this poor design and subsequent lack of adoption by Maine consumers.

Why would we inflict this on our truly small businesses in the medical market? What emergency is this massive overhaul responding to? We ask the committee to consider these questions as it considers these bills which would each accomplish the same thing: the dismantling of the small-business, consumer-friendly, craft-friendly, high-quality, and affordable Medical cannabis market in Maine. These bills represent a false solution to an imagined health crisis. As the nation and our local economy enter a time of true crisis, the last thing the state of Maine needs is such a self-inflicted wound.

Sincerely,

Mark Barnett

Policy Director, Maine Craft Cannabis Association