

Testimony in Support of LD 1840: ~~An Act to Amend the Laws Regulating the Testing of Adult Use Cannabis and Adult Use Cannabis Products~~

Good afternoon Chairman Hickman, Chairwoman Supica, and honorable members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Paul T. McCarrier, and for over fourteen years, I've poured my heart into being a registered caregiver in Maine's medical cannabis program. I'm a proud resident of Monroe, standing here with a heavy heart but unwavering hope, advocating for patients who rely on medical cannabis to ease their pain, find comfort, and reclaim their lives. I've witnessed the industry's highs and lows, navigated shifting regulations, and mourned the toll these changes have taken on caregivers like me. Today, **I ask you to support LD1840, An Act to Amend the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act.** This bill isn't just policy—it's a lifeline for caregivers teetering on the edge of ruin and for patients desperate for safe, accessible medicine. It's a chance to right wrongs that have shattered livelihoods and threatened the very heart of our program.

The most urgent crisis LD 1840 addresses is the violation of caregiver privacy, a wound that cuts deeper than words can express. The Office of Cannabis Policy (OCP) publishes a public list of our names and addresses—where we grow, make, or sell cannabis—exposing us to a world of hurt. Since 2019, Maine's medical cannabis program has lost over 1,200 caregivers, with a net loss of nearly 950 between 2021 and April 2025, plummeting from 3,257 at our peak in 2016 to just 1,886 by April 2025. That's 1,371 tax paying businesses.

These aren't just numbers; they're families broken, dreams crushed, and caregivers driven out by fear and financial devastation. Banks and lenders scour these lists, targeting us like prey. **I'll never forget the gut-wrenching day Camden National Bank closed my business and personal accounts, leaving me stranded, unable to pay bills.** Colleagues have been hit just as hard, with Citi Bank slamming doors in their faces. Now, we live in constant terror—every day wondering if our credit cards will be canceled, our bank loans yanked, or our mortgages called in because lenders claim our legal work violates their terms. I know caregivers who've lost sleep, staring at the ceiling, dreading the moment they lose their homes, their businesses, their ability to provide for their families. This fear is a shadow over our lives, pushing good people out of an industry they love, all for helping patients under Maine's laws. **LD 1840's mandate to remove our personal information from OCP's website, except upon request, is a beacon of hope.** It shields us from this relentless financial persecution, giving us a chance to serve patients without living in dread of losing everything.

LD 1840 also cuts through the bureaucratic chains that choke caregivers and small businesses. Redundant paperwork, like municipal approval forms (Which Belfast has started to charge for), steals time we could spend caring for patients, piling on stress and costs with no benefit to safety or compliance. The bill's ban on unauthorized forms and its order to rescind noncompliant ones is a breath of fresh air, letting us focus on what matters: our patients. The provision deeming facilities compliant if denied registration due to missing municipal forms before January 1, 2026, is a gesture of fairness that could save businesses and preserve jobs, keeping our communities strong.

For patients—those brave souls battling pain, illness, or disability—LD 1840 is a promise of access and dignity. By defining caregiver retail stores as public-facing and allowing sales at trade shows, festivals, or through delivery, this bill ensures that no patient, no matter how remote or immobile, is left without their medicine. It's a lifeline for those who can't travel, who live miles from a dispensary, or who need the comfort of a caregiver's care delivered to their door. These changes mean hope, relief, and the chance to live better, all under strict regulatory oversight.

The bill's clarity on cannabis extraction is a godsend, limiting hazardous substances to authorized entities and cutting duplicative approvals. This ensures patients get safe, reliable medicine

without caregivers jumping through unnecessary hoops. And LD 1840's commitment to transparency—through gross sales data in annual reports—and to research, with rules for a grant program by January 2026, invests in a future where medical cannabis can heal even more lives.

I'm asking you to support LD 1840. Without it, caregivers will keep falling—over 1,200 already gone since 2019, chased away by privacy violations, bank account closures, and the paralyzing fear of losing credit cards, loans, and homes. Patients will suffer as access shrinks and caregivers vanish. This bill protects us from financial ruin, frees us from red tape, expands access for those who need it most, and builds a stronger, fairer program. **Please, vote for LD 1840. Show Maine's caregivers and patients that you see our struggle, hear our pain, and value the work we do to bring healing and hope.**

Thank you for listening to my story and considering this urgent need.

Sincerely,
Paul T. McCarrier
Registered Caregiver, Maine Medical Cannabis Program
Monroe