

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the members of the joint standing committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Lizzy Hayes. I am an organic farmer, a medical cannabis caregiver, and I am testifying today in support of LD1840. This bill addresses many of the ways that otherwise compliant operators find themselves out of compliance or unable to operate due to changes in forms required by the office, changes in interpretations in statute, issuing of guidance documents or other changes to the program which have not undergone legislative approval as is required.

Section 4 is, in my opinion, critical to preserving the most unique and valuable aspect of Maine's medical program which is the direct to patient sales and events. The best safeguard to protecting patients is to give them access to the people who grow their medicine. It provides accountability and transparency and these direct to patient meet ups and events have been going on since the inception of the program. The interpretation that these events are not authorised puts into jeopardy this very valuable aspect of the program.

Section 6 is critical to the safety of industry workers whose banking, housing and safety have been jeopardized through the publication of their full name and location. Individuals have been de-banked and lost their mortgages due to this list. When folks are registering with the office in order to work in the industry, they are not made aware that this will result in their name being put on a public list. When I went to this page and saw my friend's nephew listed there, as a caregivers assistant under the age of 21, I was deeply upset. This could be harmful to him for a number of safety and legal reasons in the context of ongoing federal prohibition.

In the public hearing and work sessions on LD2215, the bill passed in the Judiciary committee last year which resulted in this list. The committee did not discuss a list like this. This goes way beyond what was presented by OCP for why this bill was needed and what was conceived by the committee as why they felt it was justified. Caregivers testified in opposition because they feared the outcome that we see now, which recklessly endangers industry workers and their families. Their concerns were not taken seriously.

In his testimony the director said caregivers no longer need the privacy protections that had been in statute, saying that the old way of home based caregivers is not what the program is today, that the days of cannabis industry operators being targeted are over, both are untrue. The suggestion that patients are not purchasing directly from caregivers is not only untrue, but is an activity that the office last year was asserting is not authorized, and they are shutting down farm to patient type events where patients can meet caregivers and pick up orders from them directly. Many of the information requests used to demonstrate the need for this list are already addressed with the registry ID cards and caregiver cards, which demonstrate that an individual is engaged in authorized activity if their card is active. **A simple solution would be if there was a list of RIC and CGR numbers (no names) listed as active or not, so someone could match that to the card physically presented by an individual.** This would protect individuals' privacy.

In the current political climate where citizens' civil rights are being violated, it is worrisome to be on a list that could be misused to target individuals, in this case specifically small Maine businesses who operate outside of federal law.