

Testimony In Support of:

L.D. 1847 An Act to Institute Testing and Tracking of Medical Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products Similar to Adult Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products, Dedicate a Portion of the Adult Use Cannabis Sales and Excise Tax to Medical Use Cannabis Programs and Create a Study Group

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

April 30, 2025

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs:

My name is Mark Gallagher. I am a senior consultant with Drummond Woodsum Strategic Consulting and I am here on behalf of CannabisME to speak in support of L.D. 1847 and L.D. 104, two essential pieces of legislation that will enhance the safety, consistency, and integrity of Maine's cannabis programs by requiring mandatory testing and tracking of medical cannabis products.

If passed, L.D. 104, *An Act to Protect the Health of Medical Cannabis Patients and Streamline the Mandatory Testing of Cannabis*, and L.D. 1847, *An Act to Institute Testing and Tracking of Medical Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products Similar to Adult Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products* would align medical cannabis testing and tracking standards with those already in place for adult-use products and ensure that patients—many of whom are immunocompromised, minors, and/or managing chronic illnesses—are protected from potentially harmful contaminants, pesticides, and additives.

This legislation will not only align the Maine medical cannabis program with the health and safety protections in Maine's adult use program, but it will also bring Maine's medical cannabis program into alignment with nation-wide best regulatory practices. Maine's medical program is the **ONLY** legal cannabis program in the entire country, including Maine's adult use program, that does not have mandatory health and safety testing and is one of only three states out of 41 states that have legalized cannabis that do not require electronic seed to sale tracking.

Such a change is long overdue and should not be delayed. We know from audit testing completed by the Office of Cannabis Policy that 42% of medical cannabis and medical cannabis products have harmful levels of pesticides, heavy metals, yeasts and mold, and toxins.

Press Release, Office of Cannabis Policy, Harmful Contaminants in Maine's Medical Cannabis Program Findings from the Office of Cannabis Policy's August 2023 audit testing of Maine medical cannabis and cannabis products, August 2023.

Further delaying mandatory health and safety testing for medical cannabis and medical cannabis products means another year or two years that patients will unknowingly be purchasing and

consuming contaminated products. This is unacceptable. Not only should this legislation not be delayed, but it should also be emergency legislation.

Further, we know from reporting by the Maine Wire, Maine Public Radio, and the Portland Press Herald that Maine's medical cannabis program is flooded with illicit product, which is being sold, untested, to patients. Because of the lack of electronic seed to sale tracking, illicit operators, including illegal operators associated with the Chinese Government, use Maine's program to hide their illicit operations. This has been recognized by Maine's Congressional Delegation. Maine delegation urges feds to shutdown suspected Chinese marijuana grows | Maine Public; 50 Members of Congress Sign Onto Letter Demanding Answers from DOJ on Illegal Chinese Marijuana Grows - The Maine Wire Illegal grow houses have been in Maine's medical weed market since 2021; Illegal Chinese Neurotoxins Are Coming to Maine's Blackmarket Cannabis Grows: Maine Threat Brief - The Maine Wire; Meet the man helping Maine's illegal grow houses go legal; Maine's weed laws are among the U.S.' loosest. Lawmakers want to ease them further. Electronic seed to sale tracking operated by a third-party vender prevents inversion and diversion of illicit cannabis. It also provides important oversight that deters illicit operators from using the legal market to run their operations and ensures operators are complying with state law.

This session, this Committee is considering several pieces of trying to address this issue through background check and monitoring of electrical usage, but the most effect means of preventing the illicit market and illicit products from entering the legal market is electronic seed to sale tracking provided by a third-party vender.

There is a reason why mandatory tracking and testing and electronic seed to sale tracking is accepted best practices around the country.

- It protects medical cannabis patients by ensuring access to safe, consistent medical cannabis and medical cannabis products.
- It creates consistency across cannabis regulatory frameworks, helping businesses operate more efficiently and ensuring fairness in compliance expectations.
- It reduces the inversion of illicit products into the state, thereby protecting local cultivators and manufacturers.

We urge the legislature to prioritize patient safety and program integrity by voting in favor of L.D. 1847, or L.D. 104, and work with us, to the extent possible, to ensure passage of L.D. 1847, or L.D. 104, in the full legislature.

Thank you for your attention and continued leadership on this important public health and industry issue.