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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**LD 1717, "An Act Regarding Background Checks
for Medical Cannabis Providers"**

**Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs
May 8, 2025**

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

I am Matt Harrington; and I represent Senate District 33, which includes the communities of Alfred, Lebanon, Sanford and Waterboro. I am here today to present LD 1717, "An Act Regarding Background Checks for Medical Cannabis Providers."

No doubt you have all heard about the illegal marijuana grow houses. Well, this legislation is aimed at curtailing the people who come to Maine with false identification and set up shop, so to speak.

I submitted this legislation based on a conversation with a constituent, who is here today and will testify in more detail as to the specific reasons this measure is needed.

The intent of this bill is not to pursue or penalize legitimately licensed medical cannabis providers but to do all we can to stop illegal marijuana growers and sales. There is a great need to require the same qualifications for medical providers as are required for recreational providers. Requiring complete background checks will reduce the exploitation of valid medical marijuana providers.

As I understand it, currently Maine does require a background check for medical cannabis providers; however, the check only includes Maine records. It would make sense if the check were more expansive to include all other states in order to be effective. At a minimum, this extensive check would be a bit more reassuring to those in surrounding communities in curtailing illegal grows.

Why are we giving out-of-state residents Maine licenses to operate medical cannabis facilities? As not only a policymaker but a member of law enforcement, to protect and better serve our constituents, I believe we must employ more stringent qualifications that involve using the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) rather than just check state records.

As I mentioned, folks that will follow me will be able to provide you with additional information. I appreciate your thoughtful attention and consideration of their testimony.

Thank you for your time.