

Ashley E Link  
Fryeburg  
LD 1996

Dear Committee Members,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Ashley Link, and I'm a small business owner and dedicated Organic hemp farmer in the town of Fryeburg, Maine offering farm-to-bottle Maine-made natural products.

I wanted to bring to your attention my concerns regarding LD 1996, which, as I understand it, could have significant implications for the cottage industry community of small hemp businesses like mine.

I've been cultivating hemp for the past five years to supply my online herbal brand, The Wild Pine Co, where I offer a diverse range of CBD and NON-CBD herbal supplements, all carefully crafted from foraged and cultivated Maine ingredients. If you would like to put a face to this written testimony and learn more about me & my business you can visit [thewildpineco.com](http://thewildpineco.com)

It's my understanding that LD 1996 would prohibit most full-spectrum hemp tinctures, edibles, and topical products made with licensed Maine-grown hemp, which is concerning for my small business.

A significant part of my business revolves around providing 100% compliant full-spectrum healing tinctures, topicals, and edibles, specifically designed to aid in natural pain management and address various ailments. The majority of my customers are responsible individuals from an older demographic who rely on these products for their natural pain management and general well-being.

It is scientifically shown that a CBD-rich formula with the presence of a trace amount of THC which is what makes a " Full spectrum" labeled formula significantly increases the benefits of the formula when pairing cannabinoids to create the "entourage effect" within the body maximizing the benefits.

Using current regulatory amounts of THC there are NO psychoactive implications in any of my Maine-made full spectrum formulas.

For any committee members who may not understand the classifications/ labeling of CBD here is a simple explanation.

Full-spectrum CBD includes the largest variety of cannabinoids and raw beneficial compounds of the hemp plant, including up to 0.3% THC making it the most effective CBD formula available.

Broad-spectrum CBD contains all the same compounds as full-spectrum CBD, minus THC. Hence no " entourage effect " maximized benefits

CBD isolates contain CBD only and in my opinion is a pretty gross synthetic making the least desirable variety of CBD where none of the other beneficial cannabinoids or compounds from the plant are included. CBD Isolate is something I would not put my Brand name on.

Scientifically, it's proven that a CBD-rich formula with trace amounts of THC creates the "entourage effect," within the body and significantly enhances the benefits. For more insight, I invite you to explore a few peer-reviewed studies on trace amounts of THC & the entourage effect: <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9059/11/8/2323> this one highlights pain management  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6334252/> this one is more general  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7324885> and this one highlighting the impact on mood disorders

My genuine concern is that LD 1996 might pose a potential loss for my business, which I've worked hard to build over the past five years. This bill could potentially force my customer base to choose a less effective natural medicine or take their business elsewhere. This bill would jeopardize the Brand that my customers have come to trust and appreciate. Moreover, it's not just my business that will be affected;

local establishments, like the extraction lab I use in Fryeburg, will also face challenges due to this proposed legislation.

I urge you to consider the federal stance on hemp regulation and not impose additional restrictions on Maine's already struggling hemp industry. The overregulation in recent years has taken a toll, resulting in a significant drop in certified growers. We had a peak of 191 growers in 2019, and last year, only 12 remained active. I believe this decline can be attributed to excessive red tape, stringent requirements, and the imposition of "Big Ag" USDA licensing expectations imposed on us Farmers in 2022.

As someone who understands the challenges faced by small business owners and farmers in Maine, I please request you to vote NO on LD 1996. Let's work together to foster a supportive environment for small businesses like mine, ensuring they continue to thrive and contribute to the well-being of the Maine community.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and understanding.

Warm regards,

Ashley Link  
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