



To The Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
May 8, 2023

Mark Barnett
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LD 1103 OUGHT TO PASS

Distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Mark Barnett. I'm a resident of Auburn, owner of a medical cannabis retail store in Portland called Higher Grounds of Maine, and the Policy Director for the Maine Craft Cannabis Association. We strongly urge this committee to defend Maine citizens' constitutional rights and vote LD 1103 'An Act to Allow Persons Who Lawfully Use or Possess Cannabis to Own or Possess Firearms or Ammunition' as Ought to Pass.

This bill is an important one in a state like Maine where private gun ownership is extremely common and is often essential to feeding families. Maine also has a very high level of participation in its legal Adult Use and Medical Use cannabis markets as well as a large population of home cultivators. We have long been a leader in common sense cannabis policy, and this bill carries that forward by addressing yet another injustice in our legal system that unfairly limits a Maine citizens' right to safely possess a firearm while also possessing their legal cannabis. While we cannot change federal policy overnight, even at the federal level there is movement to undo this now clearly backwards policy that presumes the possession of cannabis makes a person a dangerous criminal, something we know is a relic of draconian and completely wrongheaded Drug War policies intended to target marginalized populations and to increase prison sentences to pad the pockets of the prison industrial complex. In 2021, the [GRAM Act](#) was introduced in Congress to allow for legal possession of a firearm with the legal possession of cannabis. This year, the [Second Amendment Protection Act](#) was filed in Congress to do the same for medical cannabis patients.

Further, a federal judge in Oklahoma [ruled](#) earlier this year that the federal ban on possessing firearms and cannabis was unconstitutional. We fully agree. Maine should not participate in the violence and injustice of the Drug War in any way, and while we have come a long way from that in many areas, our citizens still need protections from these outdated and backwards federal firearms prohibitions. Please vote LD 1103 Ought to Pass.

Sincerely,
Mark Barnett
Maine Craft Cannabis Association



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