



March 29, 2021

Senator Louis Luchini
Representative Chris Caiazzo
Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Re: Written Testimony on LD 939

Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, distinguished Members of the Committee:

The members of the United Cannabis Coalition of Maine are in support of LD 939, an *Act to Support Maine's Medical Marijuana Program and Ensure Patient Access* sponsored by Representative Pluecker.

This Bill addresses a significant hurdle in the expansion of the medicinal marijuana industry. Currently medicinal caregivers are required to discharge their crop yields under what is commonly referred to as the 75/25 split.

That split assigned 75 % of that yield as available for wholesale transfer to other caregivers, caregiver retail outlets or dispensaries. The remainder 25% of the crop is assigned for sale, by rule and law, to individual cannabis patients.

Caregivers began by servicing the need of a patient. That grew to six patients and now we have removed the cap on the number of patients that can have their medical needs met (while maintaining a cap on the number of plants grown). During that evolution some caregivers realized that their business model was better suited to meet the demands of the secondary medicinal market i.e. other caregivers, retail sites or dispensaries. However, they are required to administer a parallel set of books and procedures to provide medicine to individual patients. The expected practice tests our collective ability at accepting what could in many instances be a legal fiction.

Imagine if we compelled a dairy farmer from full participation in wholesale transactions because she had not met her quota for selling milk to friends, family and random consumers until she had realized a 25% quota on her aggregate sales of that milk. I doubt we would see this as a regulatory expectation that demonstrated much common sense.

Many caregivers participate in direct patient sales. Many of them divide their crop yields in a fashion that tilts to their patient pool but at the same time there are caregivers

who can and should be allowed to sell their entire crop yield to those more inclined and likely better positioned to engage in direct patient contact and sales.

We would also ask the Committee to amend Line 16 of the bill: "*more than \$1,500 for a total plant canopy of 500 square feet or less*" to read: "*1500 square feet or less*". The increased canopy space would boost production yields for medicinal cultivators trying to meet the increasing patient demand for product.

Thank you for your full consideration of our comments.

Submitted by Mark N. Dion, Esq. lobbyist for the United Cannabis Coalition of Maine

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark N. Dion', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark N. Dion, Esq.