

Sen. Luchini, Rep. Caiazzo and members of the veterans and legal affairs committee.

My name is Matt Bayliss, I'm here as medical user of cannabis, a licensed caregiver, a licensed adult use cultivator and a member of the Maine Cannabis Industry Association legislative committee. I am here to oppose the pending legislation and to support the rule making process.

When the proposed changes to Maine's med program were put forth by OMP myself and many members of our trade organization were up in arms. It was apparent that OMP was out of touch with many of the challenges that smaller operators would encounter due to these changes. Since then OMP has engaged in an extensive outreach to caregivers and the public. I have met with OMP a handful of times over the last couple months with MCIA and on my own. We have always had a candid exchange of ideas and many changes have been made to the proposed rules that benefit small independent operators in the Maine med market. I am in favor of continuing open, honest and mature dialogue with OMP during this process. I respectfully disagree that a two year moratorium or a three year rollback is the right solution to protect small businesses and patients. I am grateful that Dawson, Julia and Mark Barnett were very generous with their time when I reached out to both parties to express my concerns about pending legislative they are advocating for. We have the same goals, just different visions on how to get there.

I am in a unique position. I am an adult use cultivator operating with less than 500 sq ft of canopy. This means I am operating under the same rules that are proposed for the med market. Metric track and trace is cumbersome and costly, especially for small operators, the monthly fees are reasonable but the upkeep of data input drives up labor costs substantially. Cameras and hard drive space that is required are ridiculously expensive. My adult use operation is the exactly the same as it was in the med market but due to the onboarding of protocols, oversight and security measures required by the state I've had to double my staff. I believe there needs to be a tiered licensing structure for medical cultivators that affords micro business protections for operations with less than 500 sq ft of canopy. Oversight for these operators should rely on a relationship between the operator and an OMP inspector rather than costly big brother/big tech oversight. I know many in Augusta will scoff at such a proposition but this is an absolutely necessary step to protect small businesses and patients. The other option would force many back into the traditional market or close shop. When the opportunity for small operators to participate in regulated markets dissolves we aren't going to learn to code, we will keep on keeping on. Give us an opportunity to continue to build our industry and contribute much needed tax revenue to our state, we are willing to bend but not break.

In closing I'd like to say that Maines cannabis rules and regulations need to centered around plant touchers. Not lobbyists representing the two largest cannabis entities on Earth or consultants that push best practices from states that have made it impossible for small operators to exist. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee might have.