

John Walker
Walker Cannabis Company

Hello,

I am a registered caregiver who operates a small individual caregiver business, and I have been continually concerned regarding the proposed legislation that is posed to radically change Maine's Medical Cannabis industry. It is my firm belief that Maine's Medical Cannabis is the finest anywhere, and as an industry it has thrived through the years and has even grown in strength through the Pandemic. It seems to me that much of the proposed legislation has been designed to drive consumers to the Adult Use market, and to effectively shrink the Medical system in several ways:

1. By greatly reducing the number of individual caregivers and small scale operators who can comply with the new rules, which are tailored to the needs of large-scale businesses
2. By the wide reaching increases in compliance requirements, which will effectively drive the price of the product up
3. By making it more difficult for individual caregivers to vend their products to patients directly thereby forcing patients to go to dispensaries or to find their products on the Adult-Use market (the proposed rules state that delivery to public locations will not be allowed despite stringent packaging requirements, and that patients must sign a sales manifest before receiving products)

I believe that all three of these things together will act to harm patient access to Medical Cannabis by greatly reducing their market options, and by increasing product prices by a factor of at least 50% (I predict ounces of Medical will go for \$300.00 on average vs the roughly \$200.00 that they go for currently, roughly on par with Recreational Prices).

Not only will these changes greatly harm the Medical System and Cannabis Industry, but I firmly believe that they will have a ripple effect which will affect many other businesses and related industries in communities here in Maine. Electricians, Carpenters, Contractors, Plumbers, will all likely take a substantial hit without caregivers to provide them with their business. Local small scale caregivers and growers make up the backbone of this industry, and the success of which directly gets invested back into their local communities. I fear that if our caregivers are replaced with large companies and multi-state operators, that our communities will not see a dime. So it is my belief that the economic impact of these rules cannot be understated and must be appropriately analyzed and publicized before any further rule making can take place. There must also be appropriate oversight from parties who are knowledgeable with the local cannabis industry here, including caregivers and patients, and the various craft cannabis organizations that Maine is home to.

The current rules that have been in place for years prior to OMP's proposed rules are a model of simplicity, and they have allowed Maine's Medical system to grow to new heights and thrive when many other industries have struggled. I believe that is a fact which should warrant some serious thought and reflection when considering how best to move forwards.

Thank you for your consideration.