

Dawson Julia
Winslow
LD 584

Hello members of the VLA committee -

My name is Dawson Julia and I live in Winslow Maine and am a very active advocate of medical cannabis as well as Adult Use. I am also the founding member of Maine Cannabis Coalition a group that was formed in August of 2016 and the reason I created that Non-profit corporation has a lot of reasoning to explain why I am completely in support of LD584. Please consider this my written testimony in full support of LD 584

It's a long story but after you read this I'm sure you will understand and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask me questions.

It was August 3rd of 2016 and as I looked out my window across the street to the Unity country store I could see a Waldo county sheriff truck was parked for what I thought was a lunch break. Shortly after a few moments there were 3 more sheriff trucks coming down the road and I watched as the 4th truck joined the other trucks and I remember getting really excited because everyone in town knew that there was a pill house 5 places down the road from my place and Naturally I thought they were finally gonna get busted!

To provide a little more background at the time I was the only caregiver storefront in the state. There were 8 dispensary licenses issued at the time and in 2008 we voted for medical marijuana to be legal but after the state issued all 8 licenses only 1 native Mainer received a license and the rest were out of staters or freshly moved to Maine. In 2016 6 dispensary licenses were owned by what I call Corporate Cannabis (trade on the stock market) but yet it was illegal for a caregiver to have a partner or partners.

I started East Coast CBDs in 2012 and I thought soon there would be a lot of caregiver stores and apparently there wasn't and I think a lot of folks were watching me and waiting to see when I would get busted. Between 2012 and 2015 I had 2 inspections and everytime there was always a conversation from the inspector about how it was illegal to have a caregiver storefront. So my message to the inspector was "you tell Marietta (Director from 2010-2016) that if she wants to violate me I'll gladly go in front of a judge with alot of elderly patients testfying for me about how I'm the only place in Maine to sell non psychoactive CBD marijuana in the state and I got beyond a reasonable doubt on my side."

Apparently the message got through to Marietta because on August 3rd of 2016 she came to my place with a total of 5 Waldo County Sheriff's trucks and they were coming for me not the "pill house". The big problelm was I was stealing a lot of patients from "corporate cannabis" and Marietta went out of her way to help them on a regular basis. In fact she planned this out because it was clearly a criminal investigation not a inspection and they thought they were taking my plants away with all those trucks. You see August 3rd was the same day my wife "Kellie's" caregiver card expired!

When the investigation was almost over Marietta asked to see the 2 caregiver cards. When I gave her Kellie's card she was very quick to point out that it had expired. So I said to Marietta in front of all the deputy's and my employees "let me check the mail because I mailed it in about 2 months ago. Marietta replied "don't bother" I said why shouldn't I she replied "lets just say it came accross my desk" while she winked at me

After a brief discussion of if it expired last night at 12:01AM or if it expired tonight at 12:01AM Then I had a ureeka moment! You see at the time we were training my stepson (Corey) to be a caregiver but he wasn't growing any plants at the time. So what I did was grabed Corey's caregiver cards and explained to Marietta that "all those plants marked K upstairs don't stand for Kellie they stand for Corey".

After everybody left I phoned a complaint to sheriff Trafton of Waldo county who

was a democrat and at the time Lepage was our governor and appointed Marietta. To my surprise sheriff Trafton was not aware that his deputy's were escorting Marietta and that 5 of his trucks were assisting.

In 2015 my place was robbed for about \$50,000 worth of plants and at the time they didn't have the "resources" to even do fingerprints but apparently they had the resources to distribute 5 trucks and deputies to go with them to assist on A inspection for a caregiver that had no violations on record. So I stated this and asked sheriff Trafton why I shouldn't contact the press and tell them everything.

To make a long story short Marietta was fired a week later.

Then eventually Director Eric Gunderson had taken over and he was appointed by Governor Mills. I had several meetings with Director Gunderson and I stressed each time to look after the locals and if anybody needs to be harrassed I recomended corporate cannabis.

In 2022 Director Gunderson resigned and one of the last things he did the day before he resigned is send a memorandum out to all the caregivers that said for now on if you sell vape pens, prerolls, pipes, roling papers or even lighters you need to have a tobacco license. To explain a little more history to make it easier to understand there was a bill in 2020 that would have made it law that you had to be a dispensary to sell vape pens, pipes even rolling papers and it failed miserably but the dispensaries already had their tobacco licenses so they didn't get A law but they got a memorandum. This was clearly a farewell gift to corporate cannabis.

Eventually Gunderson was replaced by Hudak and I could write a book for the problems Hudak has been for the locals. A petition was started in 2024 to fire Hudak and it got over 1,000 signatures but sadly nothing was done by the one person who could take action (our govenor).

On top of a serious petition that is getting ignored Hudak is also under investigation by the government oversite comittee. OCP clearly needs legislative guidance to appoint the next director before another incident occurs. I beg you to vote in favor of this bill and add another layer of protection to the locals.

Best Regards -
Dawson Julia