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LD 929

My name is Asher Putterman, board member of Maine Craft Cannabis Assoc. and a caregiver in Warren Maine. Im in support of LD929, I think increasing access and lowering barriers to a relatively safe herbal medicine to seniors and veterans would be a good thing in a state that has so many rural communities and lack of access to AU stores as well as for veterans through the VA. Access is already provided for the majority of these folks without a doctors recommendation through the Adult use program with no concerns for the lack of guidance by a Doctor. This is because of thousands of years of anecdotal safety, along with increasing data on efficacy. As pointed to in recent studies like the following.

<https://www.mdpi.com/2077-0383/8/11/1819>

<https://www.mdpi.com/2077-0383/12/4/1483>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6912698/> There have been no known human overdoses from Cannabis and few deaths have only occurred from rare allergic reactions. It is well known as one of the safest substances on earth, with literally thousands of years of constant use. That said, it also works particularly well to treat many conditions that plague the elderly, such as nausea, sleep disorder, and chronic pain and has shown great efficacy against conditions common to veterans returning from active duty, like PTSD and suicide prevention. The one concern brought up recently in medical studies seems to be an increase in possible heart conditions in the elderly, who may already have increased cardiovascular issues. This is a concern, but that same concern also exists in many common over the counter medications that can be purchased without interacting with a doctor. Those medications include commonly used NSAIDs like aspirin, Ibuprofen, naproxen. Also decongestants like Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed), phenylephrine (found in many cold medicines). As well as Proton Pump Inhibitors such as Omeprazole (Prilosec), esomeprazole (Nexium). This content also exists with Caffeine. You may recall a recent lawsuit filed against Panera Bread after a teenager had a heart attack from a "highly caffeinated lemonade" The ubiquity of highly caffeinated beverages available to the elderly is quite abundant sans a doctors recommendation. Increased age greatly increases chances of Cardiovascular complications in many ways and that shouldn't be taken lightly, although most elderly are aware of this and use caution when taking new substances, most of the studies are inconclusive and recommend starting slowly with herbal medicines like cannabis, which is a common recommendation given by medical cannabis providers when providing cannabis to someone who is not familiar with it as a medicine. These same cautions are often not provided in AU settings, where it is more of a commodity simply being sold. This is a great area for public education, maybe by an office like OCP. Maybe backed by more comprehensive studies and data.

Although there is an abundance of Cannabis available in some regions of the state, access remains a challenge for many as many doctors are prevented from prescribing including the entire VA. AU stores are often more rare in the rural areas that are more commonly covered by medical cannabis providers and not being able to access a medical card could mean a long drive sometime several hours to access a legal AU provider. Whereas a medical provider will often be able to deliver directly in most rural areas of the state and provide more relevant information on usage than an adult use store. I often recommend to patients not only speaking with a doctor, but many resources for digging into medical studies and information. Such as

<https://grannystormcrowdlist.wordpress.com> <https://unitedpatientsgroup.com>

<https://projectcbd.org> <https://healer.com> as well as many other resources. I think we should act with caution and start slowly when introducing inexperienced users to medical cannabis and its always great to have feedback and doctor consultation, but this is also an issue of access and lack of access may be more harmful to many people in these two demographics than the risks associated with use. Please consider supporting this bill. Thank you.