

Sam Tracy
Portland
LD 104

My name is Sam Tracy, and I spent over 10 years working in cannabis policy. I've worn many hats in cannabis: working for a small multi-state operator, running campaigns for legalization, serving on the boards of nonprofits, and working for a consulting firm that advised businesses and governments on cannabis policy. Last year, I served as the Cannabis Policy Expert on Maine's Cannabis Hospitality Task Force, volunteering my expertise to help the state craft a sensible policy on hospitality.

I am strongly in favor of LD 104 and any other efforts to institute contaminant testing in Maine's medical cannabis industry. Quite frankly, it is shameful that Maine is the only state in the entire country that does not require testing for its medical program. This needs to be fixed.

I've worked in dozens of state cannabis programs, and have read literally every statute and regulation in place before 2023, creating databases on how states handle issues like testing. Maine has always stuck out as a severe outlier in not testing its medical cannabis.

As you likely know, this was not by design, but just an accident of history and our legislative process here in Maine. Maine was one of the very early medical cannabis programs, and it started up when states were still figuring things out. As more states came online and problems were identified, mandatory testing became a standard practice, and nowadays it would be impossible for a new law to pass without testing requirements. But because there are barriers to changing existing law, especially when there are vested interests fighting back against regulations, this hasn't happened yet.

As you also know, we already require testing for adult-use cannabis, since that program started up more recently and was able to incorporate best practices. This is a good thing, but the irony is palpable: we currently require testing for products consumed by the general population, but don't require it for products specifically geared towards people who are by definition less healthy. Medical patients are more likely to be immunocompromised or have comorbidities that make untested cannabis even more dangerous.

Our state motto translates to "I lead," which Maine does on so many issues. But on cannabis testing, we are far behind the rest of the country. Please bring Maine's cannabis program up to date by requiring testing for medical products.