



Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association  
**In Opposition To**

LD 1320 - *An Act to Prevent Illicit Cultivation and Trafficking Within Maine's Regulated Cannabis Industry*  
May 8, 2025

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Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Rebecca Lambert, and I am providing testimony in opposition to LD 1320 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) elected 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). For reference, MMA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit member service organization and aims to help provide policy solutions that work for all residents in Maine and the LPC guides MMA's advocacy efforts and establishes positions on bills of municipal interest.

It is the LPC's understanding that the proposed amendment would modify the definition of a "disqualifying drug offense" to exclude offenses occurring more than three years prior to an individual submitting an application for licensure under either the medical or adult-use cannabis programs. While local leaders support responsible cannabis regulation, they feel this amendment risks undermining public safety and trust, as well as the integrity of local cannabis markets.

The message bears repeating, municipalities carry the brunt of oversight, enforcement, and community impact, as it relates to cannabis businesses, and kindly ask you to consider the following municipal concerns.

*Erosion of Local Control and Oversight.* Municipal government is charged with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. By imposing an arbitrary three-year cut-off to the disqualifying drug offense definition weakens the criteria and severely limits a community's ability to ensure that licensees reflect the highest standards of accountability and character. A three-year window is not a sufficient safeguard in cases where the offense simply involved cannabis and should be further scrutinized for instances that involve trafficking, manufacturing, or distributing controlled substances outside of a legal framework.

*Public Trust and Community Standards.* Residents must have confidence that licensees, particularly those operating in their neighborhoods, have demonstrated long-term good-standing, and not just for short-term compliance. Drug offenses, including those involving intent to distribute, can reflect deeper patterns of behavior and a narrow lookback period sends the wrong message about the seriousness of such offenses and could provoke backlash from communities already wary of any expansion to the cannabis industry.

*Equity Cannot Be Achieved by Abandoning Standards.* While local leaders firmly support cannabis equity and second chances, this proposal would adopt a one-size-fits-all approach that fails to distinguish between low-level possession charges and more serious offenses. True equity policy should be precise, restorative, and tailored, and urge the committee to consider alternative pathways involving a formal review process, rather than allowing automatic eligibility after three years.





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*Undermining Law Enforcement and Re-entry Programs.* Law enforcement agencies and re-entry coordinators work hard to support individuals returning to society from incarceration, including those with drug offenses. By reducing the disqualification period so broadly, the bill has the potential to bypass established systems of accountability and programs supporting re-entry.

For these reasons the LPC is opposed to LD 1320 and instead encourages a balanced approach that considers the severity of the offense, rehabilitation efforts, and a case-by-case review. Public safety, regulatory integrity, and community trust must remain paramount when making licensing decisions.

Thank you for your time and considering the municipal perspective on this issue.



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