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**Sent:** Monday, March 14, 2016 8:23 PM

**To:** Maxine Grad; Willem Jewett; Tom Burditt; Chip Conquest; William Frank; Martin LaLonde; Marcia Martel; Betty Nuovo; Barbara Rachelson; Vicki Strong; Gary Viens

**Subject:** S.241

To: House Judiciary Committee Members

From: Edie Miller, East Montpelier, VT

Date: March 15, 2016

I write to you as a retired businesswoman and educational administrator, as well as a mother, and grandmother.

I urge you to oppose S.241 – the marijuana legalization bill. Taking this position is not where I expected to find myself. However, as I read and listen to the pros and cons of this bill, I have come to believe that not only would a law such as this deliver an unfortunate message to young and old in this state—i.e. marijuana is fine and carries no risks—but for me, more convincingly, it does not accomplish any of the goals that I hear stated by the supporters.

- It does not appear that the illegal markets in the states that have legalized the casual use of marijuana have disappeared or decreased in scope or power.
- It does not appear that tax revenues offset the costs of regulation
- It doesn't help law enforcement cut down on illegal use of the drug

The health studies on the use of the marijuana point to the potential for real harm. Those studies appear to be definitive when studying the use by persons under 25 years old whose brains are still developing. Other studies are far less conclusive, but raise the possibilities of links to mental illness, suicide, and the use of other more potent drugs. And a significant factor that must remain foremost in this discussion is that the marijuana now on the market is far more potent, and, therefore carries, more risk than that available in earlier decades. More study is needed,

The fact that there are no readily available tests to determine whether someone is “under the influence” is another downside. The possibility of more accidents caused as a result of use is strong.

Vermont has decriminalized the use of this drug which seems to me to be an appropriate action. Pointing to the legalization of alcohol as a reason to take this next step seems to me to be totally illogical.

You and your fellow legislators should be studying the experiences of other states that have already gone down this path to learn how this very significant step might play out over time.

This is not a time nor a way to experiment with human health. The fact that most health providers, law enforcement groups, and educators oppose this bill should give pause.

I urge you to listen to all sides of this argument and, ultimately, to vote “no” on S. 241.