

Memorandum

To: House Human Services Committee
From: Shayne Lynn, Executive Director, Champlain Valley Dispensary, Inc.
Monique McHenry Executive Director, VT Patients Alliance
Re: S.216
Date: April 26, 2018

Thank you for inviting us to testify on behalf of the Vermont Cannabis Trades Association, which includes three of the existing Vermont dispensaries, located in Burlington, Montpelier, and Brattleboro. We supported S.216 as passed by the Senate and understand that this committee would only like to hear what we believe are most essential parts of the bill. We believe they are as follows:

1. Remove the requirement that patients have a locked container

Requiring patients to have a locked container presents an added cost to new patients.

- All products that are sold at the dispensaries are in child-proof containers or resistant bags, so there is no need for a locked container.
- The public will not be required to have their marijuana in a child-resistant or locked container. Dispensary patients will already be a step ahead by having their marijuana in a child-resistant container.

2. Temporary IDs for background checks for employees.

Requiring background checks for employees can take over six weeks. We have found that employees living pay check to pay check cannot wait six weeks before starting a new job.

- We request background checks are similar to caregiver background checks where DPS can perform annual in-state checks
- We ask that the creation of temporary IDs, similar to state employees waiting on background checks, are permitted for first-time employees to begin employment without having to wait the 4-6 weeks for a finger-print BCI check to be processed.

3. Inventory, auditing and testing – Section 5

Under § 4474e

- (1) and (n) the words **test** and **testing** were added – This language recognizes, and makes it clear, that dispensaries are already testing.
- (4) changes the days that dispensaries must submit their audits from 60 to 90 days.
- (3) (A) allows dispensaries to have 3 mature plants per patients (a change from 2 plants) - With more patients using products that are extracted from the plant, we are finding that patients are too limited by the 2-plant limit.

4. Not disqualifying medical marijuana patients

We support the language that medical marijuana patients should not be disqualified for needed medical procedure or treatment, solely because they are on the registry.

5. Expansion of the list of qualifying conditions

We support allowing health care professionals to determine if there is another disease, condition or treatment that might benefit from using cannabis. We appreciate last year's change to the law which added Parkinson's, PTSD, and Crohn's disease. We continue to hear from patients who would like to use the dispensaries, but are limited by the qualifying conditions. Therapeutic use should not be limited to certain conditions.

6. Testing, seeds, and clones

We would ask you to consider allowing dispensaries to provide testing services to the general public. In light of the passage of H.511, Vermonters will have the ability to grow and possess marijuana. To provide safe usage, Vermont adults who decide to exercise the ability to grow marijuana, should be able to have their product tested for potency and contaminants before consumption. They should also be able to purchase their starting material (seeds and clones) from a reliable and safe source, such as the dispensaries.

7. Section 8 Testing by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

This section is in another bill, S. 276 - An act relating to rural economic development, which is in House Agriculture and Forestry committee. We ask that you remove this section from S.216. We are planning on meeting with DPS and Agency of Ag over the summer to work on language for testing of marijuana. S.276 is focused on testing of hemp.

Thank you for this time and opportunity to speak with you today.