



August 25, 2020

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Representative Maxine Grad
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary
115 State Street Room 30
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Representative Maxine Grad,

The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility (Responsibility.org) is a national not-for-profit that leads the fight to eliminate drunk and multi-substance impaired driving, with a focus of underage drinking and is funded by the following distillers: Bacardi U.S.A., Beam Suntory: Brown-Forman: Constellation Brands, Inc: DIAGEO; Edrington; Mast-Jägermeister US, Inc., Moët Hennessy USA; and Pernod Ricard USA. To learn more, visit www.responsibility.org.

Responsibility.org supports **S. 234** which provides administrative penalties and procedures for involvement with cannabis by persons under the age of 21. The bill helps to deter the use of cannabis by persons under the age of 21 and provides incentives for offenders to utilize the resources of the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program. We urge swift passage of **S. 234**.

While underage drinking is at historic lows, past year and daily cannabis consumption have remained steady over the years among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.

- Daily cannabis use now outpaces cigarette use across all grades (MTF, 2018).
- A total of 10.5% of 8th graders, 27.5% of 10th graders, and 35.9% of 12th graders report past year consumption (MTF, 2018).
- Cannabis vaping increased significantly between 2017 and 2018. The prevalence of cannabis was 2.6% among 8th graders, 7% among 10th graders, and 7.5% among 12th graders. These numbers represent year over year increases of 62.5%, 62.8%, and 53.1% respectively (MTF, 2018).
- Most high school students (73%) do not view regular cannabis smoking as harmful (MTF, 2017).

S. 234 should be passed to deter cannabis use by those under 21 and effectively utilize screening and assessment tools to prevent dangerous consequences of cannabis on the developing brain of persons under the age of 21. Passage of S. 234 will also prevent cannabis impaired driving for those under 21. Responsibility.org supports the elimination of impaired driving as identified through three key policy statements, [Multi-substance-Impaired-Driving](#), [Drug-Testing-in-Impaired-Driving-Cases](#) and [Oral-Fluid-Screening](#).

Sincerely,

Brandy Axdahl
Senior Vice President, Responsibility Initiatives