

Dear Chair Birong, Vice Chair Hango, and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing today in strong support of bill s.278 and I appreciate this opportunity to share a small producer's perspective.

My wife Kristin and I operate Tilia Hills Farm in Fairfield, we're a tier 1 outdoor cultivator and we have been licensed since the beginning of this market. Of particular concern for our small farm is protecting the provisions for direct sales in sections 5 and 6 of the bill. What we see in other state markets is growing consolidation, homogenization, and failure, and we are desperate to help Vermont avoid these outcomes. A market that relies on and centers retailers only is clearly capturing only a small percentage of consumers. It's painfully clear to us that when people within this industry are pushing against direct sales and employing the language of prohibition that they're acting out of fear for their own struggling businesses and not in the best interest of the market, the expansion of tax revenue, or average Vermonters. It is our belief that allowing for special events permits as outlined in s.278 will in fact bring otherwise reluctant consumers into the market, and that retailers will also benefit. This is a structural change to our existing laws that is more sensible, more in line with Vermont's character, and will make the cannabis industry look more like every other cottage industry in the state. I respectfully ask that these comments be posted to the committee's page for today's testimony and I would also like to say that I'd be happy to join you in Montpelier to offer testimony in person.

Thanks very much for your time.

Ethan Kramer  
Tilia Hills Farm