

From: [REDACTED]
To: DOH.OMCCR
Subject: WRITTEN TESTIMONY
Date: Monday, September 26, 2022 2:03:16 PM

Email

[REDACTED]

Name

Holly Viola

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Please select the meeting date that you are submitting written testimony for.

August 2, 2022

Please select the agenda items numbers you are submitting written testimony for.

- Agenda Item #1
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Aloha,

I'm not sure how to select agenda items since they are pretty vague, so apologies. This testimony is regarding having both recreational and medical marijuana, which I believe is the discussion point.

My comment relates to the use of a dual-use system vs just legalizing marijuana and getting rid of requirements for medical licenses.

I 150% support legalizing recreational use, as so many other states have already done. There has been no impact on our communities other than less drug dealers, controlled product quality, great revenue for the state, and happy shoppers. I was thrilled to stop dealing with the licensing nonsense...

I come from Washington state the first (tied with Colorado) to legalize recreational cannabis. We had a very robust medical marijuana registry system for 15-20 years prior. They considered keeping both medical and recreational (tax benefits for medical), but ultimately got rid of any medical registry system or distinction because management of both would be too difficult and completely unnecessary.

The only people who benefit from keeping a medical registry are the sham doctors who approve you. Patients have to shell out money while others would not? How would that make sense except to licensing doctors/businesses? It's really quite annoying as a patient to constantly spend so much money and impossible for the state to manage both systems.

In Washington, we passed recreational via voter initiative in 2016. The state spent a year planning how to control growers, build rules, handle store locations, let growers get enough crop, etc. During that time, medical continued as it was. Many of the medical shops eventually converted to much-easier-to-shop-at recreational stores.

When I first came to Hawaii many times before buying my home there, I couldn't get an out of state license because you require a copy of my state's license, which of course does not exist for those in states that have legal recreational.

I am not a partying drug abuser. I had a license since 2010 due to extreme medical issues. But I would strongly prefer my state just allow recreational and get rid of the difficult medical system. I'm not picking on Hawaii's system--it's a pain and costly for patients everywhere that has medical.

Benefits to recreational only: medical licensees don't have to regularly shell out money they may not be able to afford while still have access to the medicine they need. The state makes a TON of money on sales tax. Street dealers go out of business. Require all marijuana be grown in HI by licensed growers and boom: massive boost to the economy.

Cons to recreational only: The state will need to ensure enough product is able to be grown. Some "doctors" and clinics won't have that revenue stream. (pssst it's a scam anyway.) And ya gotta figure out what to do about crazy tourists.

Really: it's a no-brainer that having one system (recreational) is so much easier on the state and patients. It may take a year or so to get set up like in Washington, but it's very nice now and you keep medical open with some overlap until the kinks are ironed out. And the economic boost is huge.

As for out of control tourists: marijuana should be available to those 21 and over only, just like alcohol. I think everyone with a brain realizes at this point that a bunch of stoned idiots is better and safer than a bunch of drunk idiots, and I would bet many tourists game it all already.

I just bought my home in Hawaii about a year ago and while everything is working fine now, it just seems so silly to constantly have to pay way too much money to renew a license. Anybody non-medical who wants marijuana will get it anyway.

thanks,
holly