



March 20, 2024

RE: SB 555 The Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act

Opponent

Cheryl Kumberg

President, Kansas Cannabis Coalition

To Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for having a hearing on a cannabis bill at this time. The Kansas Cannabis Coalition represents medical cannabis patients across the state and supports their right to have access to affordable, tested, and easily obtainable plant medicine. We believe in good policy that includes equity, and inclusion for all who want to be involved in the cannabis industry. Public safety, program transparency, patient and provider education, as well as program oversight is essential to a successful program. As proposed, this bill does not address some important aspects of patient needs and creates a monopoly of cannabis providers who may own unlimited hubs and grow facilities. Our concerns with the bill are:

- Limiting licensed cannabis producers to four creates a monopoly leaving out established producers across the state who have been involved in the cannabis industry for years. Producers will grow, manufacture, and sell their products excluding any opportunity for product manufacturing and retail sales by others. This is neither fair nor equitable.
- Patients will be required to pre-purchase cannabis products via internet using a non-refundable account. This limits purchases from patients who do not have banking or computer access, are shelter challenged, or operate on a cash basis.
- There is a public health concern for new cannabis users due to lack of healthcare provider/patient cannabis education.
- Bill language suggesting cannabis products be sold via a pharmacy is questionable. On November 23, 2023, the DEA sent a letter to a Georgia pharmacy informing them that it is illegal to sell a schedule one drug from a DEA registered pharmacy. Labeling requirements and transportation restrictions are unreasonable. A standard 30 ml bottle cannot contain the labeling information requirements in this bill .
- Transportation of purchased products once opened is not permitted showing total disregard to patient needs.
- Age requirements do not allow children who use cannabis for approved conditions to continue use when they turn 18. There are also parents (age 18-20) of children who will be unable to purchase cannabis for their child who is an approved patient.

There are other concerns such as the proliferation of illicit markets due to overpriced products, limited access, limited cultivar, excessive tax of 8%, and a pilot program with a 5 year end date. Patients are mandated to sign HIPAA waivers allowing the “distribution hubs” to discuss with their physicians their private, personal medical information. Kansas residents deserve a sensible medical cannabis program, and we feel Senate Bill 555 with its plethora of poor policy is not the solution. We ask that it does not pass out of the committee.

Respectfully,

*Cheryl Kumberg*

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