

My name is Charolette Kuchta and I am the owner and operator of Sunmed | Your CBD Store in Chardon, which I have proudly operated since 4/23/22. I am here today to express my strong support for House Bill 198.

Ohio has fostered the growth of a vibrant and responsible hemp industry, providing consumers with safe, accessible wellness products. Businesses like mine have invested deeply in our communities, helping building trust with customers through transparency, quality, and education.

House Bill 198 offers a thoughtful, balanced framework for the regulation of hemp products. By emphasizing licensing, testing, and labeling, the bill addresses legitimate public safety concerns while preserving the vitality of the industry and protecting small businesses. Regulation — rather than prohibition — is the prudent and effective path forward. HB 198 ensures that consumers are safeguarded against bad actors without stifling economic opportunity or innovation.

In contrast, other bills propose shifting hemp products entirely into the marijuana dispensary system — a move that would place undue burdens on the hemp industry, penalize responsible operators, and severely restrict consumer access to wellness products.

House Bill 198 recognizes the unique nature of hemp and the businesses that serve this sector. It establishes clear, enforceable standards that protect consumers and legitimate businesses alike, ensuring that the hemp wellness market remains distinct, appropriately regulated, and widely accessible — rather than subsumed into a system designed for intoxicating products.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support a regulatory approach that balances public safety with economic opportunity. House Bill 198 achieves this goal, and I strongly encourage your favorable consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.