

---

**Ohio 136TH General Assembly  
House Judiciary Committee  
HB160 Opponent Testimony  
May 07, 2025**

Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Isaacsohn and members of the House Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present opponent testimony before you today regarding HB160, an anti cannabis bill that would place Ohio back into a “New Era of Cannabis Prohibition” creating laws criminalizing the cannabis community and endangering the existence of Ohio’s current cannabis industry programs. A bill that dismisses the will of the Ohio people.

My name is Tim Johnson, I’m a retired Law Enforcement Officer, an Air Force Veteran and the President/Founder of Cannabis Safety First. I have spent the last ten years in the people's house as an Advocate, Legislative Advisor, Safety/Security Specialist and Subject Matter Specialist as a participant in creating Ohio’s medical cannabis program, hemp program and advising on Issue2 legislative rule packaging revision language.

HB160 presents as a redundant bill to the current rule packages of Issue2 still under construction, to rules currently in place for the medical cannabis program and hemp program. To share a few; child resistant and non attractive packaging already exist, no public consumption such as at ballparks exists and commonsense guidelines and guardrails have been implemented for industry standards, public safety and personal safety.

Jim Canepa, DCC, has been doing a great job in promulgating rule packages by following the timeline of Issue2 which 2.2 million Ohion’s voted in favor of. There is no reason to legislatively interfere with this process until its completion or to interrupt its progress other than to introduce unwarranted regulatory language and to criminalize Ohio’s cannabis patients and adult consumers based upon the social stigma fallacies and fear mongering lies directed at the cannabis community and industry.

The paramount reason for cannabis legalization is to correct the criminalization laws, free up our courts and first responders and to address the decriminalization of cannabis. HB160 presents as though the ORC 2925 chapter drug laws might as well be rewritten to further criminalize the cannabis community. Legalization is not legalization until consumers/patients are free from prosecution.

---

**HB160 presented as a concern for public safety and to protect our children. If this is true then let's address the real issues of public safety and protect our children with sincerity and care by addressing the following;**

- **Firearms, 47,000 deaths in 2024.**
- **Alcohol, 2700 permits in Ohio. Number 1 drug killer in the US.**
- **Tobacco, over 8 million deaths yearly. May kill you on the package.**
- **Melatonin, Killing children and adolescents, 11k ER visits in recent years.**
- **Caffeine, Powder forms and drinks with Ohio case precedents/death.**
- **Bullying, rampant in schools and community, depression kills.**
- **Mental challenges (depression), number 1 killer of adolescents.**

**HB160 presents as a bill to enhance criminal penalties rather than to support the potential of a vibrant and sustainable new industry in Ohio creating jobs, companies and revenue.**

**HB160 tax proposal language will promote consumers and patients to return to the illicit market, return to personal cultivation, purchasing unsafe products from on-line and driving to border states to purchase products which may result in collapsing the Ohio commercial industry. Tax language goes further to harm the intent of distributing taxes to participating municipalities and distributing to specific entities.**

**Issue2 did present as an epic failure in providing no criminal justice reform language to protect patients and consumers. Across the country cannabis reform language either legislatively, via initiative or amendment establishes a framework for the regulatory body and the licensees, patients and consumers are left unprotected. Issue2 presented discriminatory behavior by not providing stand alone processors an opportunity to become vertically integrated to create a sustainable business model. Perhaps now is Ohio's opportunity to employ such guardrails. As it was stated, someday full legalization with an uncapped market will take place. Why not make that today? Why must we wait and further continue the criminalization of cannabis in Ohio?**

**Why did 2.2mil Ohioans vote to approve Issue2? Perhaps because some were attracted to personal cultivation, or some were attracted to the Economic Impact Opportunity (social equity) for level 3 cultivator licenses or for the 50 applicable dispensary licenses. Regardless of the reason we voted as a right to do so for a fair, inclusive and protected legal cannabis program in Ohio.**

**The elimination of these specialty licenses' "business impact" may result in the loss of some 300 plus new companies in Ohio.**

**Vendor licensing on private property presents a fourth amendment issue. Is this a necessary step to harm the compliant events or to reduce the bad players?**

---

Although it has been adamantly denied, we have discussed and introduced through ACTs various clean-up language proposals since the inception of the medical program in 2016 (HB523), the hemp program in 2019 (SB57) and adult choice language improvements for Issue2 to no avail legislatively.

For Clarity:

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce wishes to protect their members from cannabis while at the same time accepting memberships from cannabis licensees.

Prosecutors fear the loss of their drug seizure asset funds.

Law Enforcement acknowledges cannabis is not a paramount societal criminal problem or drug addiction issue.

SB55 clarifies the absence of science to prove impaired driving.

SB59 wishes to remove taxes from firearms, an encouragement to purchase and stand your ground.

Studies show real estate values increase with legalization.

Studies show cannabis use by adolescents decline upon state legalization.

No one to date has died from cannabis as the defining cause. The Ohio CDC is incorrect.

Bible scripture in Genesis reads of every seed bearing plant and in Exodus scripture reads of kaneh-bosem oil as the holy anointing oil.

Should the smoking of hemp be banned as a result of odor being the same as cannabis, then rightfully so probable cause based on the odor of cannabis or hemp shall invalidate car, person and building searches.

The federal Laguardia report shares cannabis is not a gateway drug.

Expungements of minor misdemeanors (2.5oz flower) already exist in Ohio's expungement program. F5/F4's possession convictions need to be expunged.

The rule of 2.5oz flower and 15gm concentrate are in conflict with the amount of product patients and adults may purchase each day per rule. This is a problem with public personal possession limits.

Limiting homegrown numbers is based on smoking perceptions and excludes the amount of flower needed for one to produce their own consumables and topicals.

Shall it be Just Like Alcohol? Then why not cannabis DORA for consumption?

---

While the discussion for an inclusive, sustainable and successful commercial cannabis program continues we must respect the fact that Ohio patients and consumers shared avenues to obtain cannabis products prior to creating the medical and adult programs and will continue to have access should the commercial industry fail. Finding cannabis in Ohio is like finding chocolate in a candy store.

I'll say again, Legalization is not legalization until we are free from prosecution.

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Judiciary Committee I thank you for your time and am willing to address any questions to topic.

In Safety,  
Tim Johnson  
614.736.1861  
Founder / President  
Cannabis Safety First LLC  
[timj.cannabissafetyfirst@gmail.com](mailto:timj.cannabissafetyfirst@gmail.com)



Resources;

 Hemp ACT 2025

 probable cause act 2025

 Ohio cannabis reform act 2025

 melatonin act 2025

<https://www.axios.com/local/cleveland/2025/02/06/ohios-woeful-anti-tobacco-spending>

<https://www.cleveland19.com/story/37970384/fda-bans-bulk-pure-caffeine-years-after-ohio-teens-deadly-overdose/>

<https://www.13abc.com/2024/06/27/clearing-up-confusion-about-marijuana-ovi-ohio/>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/kids-caffeine-dangerous-combination-study-suggests-n132536>

<https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/alcohol>

---

<https://com.ohio.gov/about-us/media-center/news/online-resource-highlights-liquor-permit-renewal-process>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1zxB3KFsS2fAJADc/?>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9xxd8w57kjo>

<https://tomo.com/blog/retail-marijuana-dispensaries-could-drive-higher-home-value/>

<https://www.marijuanamoment.net/youth-marijuana-use-in-colorado-continues-to-decline-since-legalization-took-effect-contradicting-prohibitionist-fears/>

<https://www.marijuanamoment.net/teen-marijuana-use-has-fallen-over-the-past-decade-as-more-states-enacted-legalization-new-cdc-report-shows/>

[https://globalcannabinoidrc.com/gcrc-blog/f/mechoulam-2024-research-study-on-cannabidiolic-acid-methyl-ester?fbclid=IwY2xjawl8KO5leHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHf9sbOT5xEvWIXeH3CO0LHW5r0ahB88jm\\_j8FTC8\\_8L5iQ1T2batqUhOqQ\\_aem\\_GxB\\_u gn-2SHNXzC60tTAwA](https://globalcannabinoidrc.com/gcrc-blog/f/mechoulam-2024-research-study-on-cannabidiolic-acid-methyl-ester?fbclid=IwY2xjawl8KO5leHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHf9sbOT5xEvWIXeH3CO0LHW5r0ahB88jm_j8FTC8_8L5iQ1T2batqUhOqQ_aem_GxB_u gn-2SHNXzC60tTAwA)

<https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/navigating-the-complexities-of-cannabis-3621905/>

[https://cannabis.net/blog/opinion/over-32000-cannabis-studies-have-been-published-in-the-last-10-years-dispelling-the-myth-of-not?fbclid=IwAR2xQYGz8Hecml0Xfe\\_rBoBvYgriQXVV-jZ4PeGiO\\_4tjz3iNaih1VY9Vy4\\_aem\\_AQopkpSidkq1D4\\_VK6DccgVb-lqBu0tgtlGO-MYmKrqCla1TgQIJNfAwY\\_KMUZ-UBg](https://cannabis.net/blog/opinion/over-32000-cannabis-studies-have-been-published-in-the-last-10-years-dispelling-the-myth-of-not?fbclid=IwAR2xQYGz8Hecml0Xfe_rBoBvYgriQXVV-jZ4PeGiO_4tjz3iNaih1VY9Vy4_aem_AQopkpSidkq1D4_VK6DccgVb-lqBu0tgtlGO-MYmKrqCla1TgQIJNfAwY_KMUZ-UBg)

<https://www.nyam.org/175th/175th-timeline/mayor-laguardia-commissions-academy-report-marijuana-usage/>

<https://norml.org/news/2025/03/20/analysis-historic-drop-in-alcohol-sales-as-legal-cannabis-sales-spike/>

<https://apnews.com/article/michigan-marijuana-car-search-c7bdf15a4eada26a3c12a46cc4f07a98#>

<https://cedclinic.com/history-of-cannabis-oppression-and-stigma/>

<https://blog.omegastore.com/the-rise-of-cannabis-tourism-and-hospitality/>

<https://www.cleveland.com/news/2025/04/congressional-cannabis-caucus-co-chair-dave-joyce-proposes-federal-marijuana-reforms.html>

***"It's unconscionable that states legalize something that people have been criminalized for and not make space at the table for those harmed by the war on cannabis."***

---