

To the Chairman, Vice Chairman and all members of the committee.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before you today.

My name is Elliott Durant and I am a member of the Ohio Cannabis Consumer Coalition but today I come to you as just a passionate advocate for a plant that has saved many lives. Cannabis has been a big part of my life for 26 years now, I am 36, you do the math.. Cannabis has been a part of my life in many ways from using to home growing to being in the community, and for the last 6 years, being in Ohio's legal cannabis industry. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 56—not out of disregard for the rule of law, but out of deep concern for the democratic process and the will of the people of Ohio.

The voters of this state made their voices clear when they passed Issue 2. They did not vote for half-measures or hidden rollbacks. They voted for a future where cannabis policy reflects fairness, common sense, and forward progress—not outdated stigmas or punitive overreach.

Senate Bill 56 disregards that mandate. Rather than honoring the voter-approved framework, this bill pivots toward criminalization—targeting individuals who share cannabis with one another despite it now being legal under state law.

If our goal is to promote public safety and public health, then educate not incarcerate.. There is a glaring lack of comprehensive cannabis education in Ohio—whether for law enforcement, politicians, medical professionals, or the public..but Instead of investing in education and harm reduction, this bill doubles down on punitive measures. That is not progress; that is regression.

We must also acknowledge a broader truth: cannabis policy has, for too long, been weaponized disproportionately against marginalized communities. Senate Bill 56 risks repeating those injustices under the guise of regulation.

Respectfully, I urge this body to pause and consider whether this legislation reflects the will of the voters—or simply the will to control a movement they do not yet understand or have not been properly educated on. Ohioans voted for legalization, not recriminalization in disguise.

Do not betray those who placed trust in you yet lead with compassion, with fairness, respect and most importantly, education.

Thank you.