



**Ohio House of Representatives
House Judiciary Committee
June 2, 2025
Proponent Testimony on SB 56 (as amended)**

Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Leah Kaufman, and I serve as Vice President of Public Policy at Shatterproof, a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to ending the addiction crisis. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 56, and to offer comments on the recent changes made in the amended version of the bill.

Shatterproof works across the country to promote evidence-based public policies that address substance use disorder and protect public health—especially for young people. We commend this Committee and the Ohio General Assembly for taking up this legislation to responsibly regulate adult-use cannabis. Your leadership is vital as Ohio moves into this new legal landscape.

Emerging research continues to underscore the risks of cannabis use among youth and young adults, including:

- A significant link between **Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD)** and **schizophrenia** in young men.ⁱ
- An association between **cannabis use and youth suicide**, with higher suicide rates in states with recreational legalization.ⁱⁱ
- Evidence that **more restrictive cannabis laws are associated with lower rates** of cannabis- and opioid-involved suicides.ⁱⁱⁱ

As Ohio implements legalization, strong, statutory safeguards are essential—not just rules that can be changed without legislative oversight.

We commend the amended version of SB 56 for **adding THC regulations specific to cannabis beverages**. This is a positive and important step in acknowledging that different types of cannabis products require differentiated policy approaches.

However, we are concerned about two **key protections that were removed** in the amended version:

1. THC Limits per Serving and per Package

The original bill set clear and appropriate limits of **10 mg of THC per serving and 100 mg per package** for non-combustible, non-vaporized products. These limits are **standard best practices** in many other states and are critical to prevent overconsumption and accidental ingestion, especially among youth. The amended version defers this entirely to agency rulemaking.

Recommendation: We urge the Committee to restore **statutory THC caps** consistent with the original version—just as the amended version now codifies caps for cannabis-infused beverages. Maintaining consistency across product types reinforces public

safety and protects consumers.

2. **Protections Against Youth-Targeted Advertising**

The original Senate-passed version prohibited cannabis advertising within **500 feet of schools, churches, libraries, playgrounds, parks**, and other places where children congregate. It also restricted advertisements deemed **attractive to minors**. The amended version **removed these statutory guardrails**, leaving advertising regulation solely to the discretion of the Division of Cannabis Control.

While we respect the rulemaking authority of the Division, **legislative clarity matters**—especially when it comes to **protecting youth from targeted advertising**. Without clear statute, future regulatory changes could weaken these protections.

Recommendation: We urge you to **reinstate the 500-foot advertising buffer zones and youth-specific restrictions** in the bill text.

In line with our prior testimony, we also continue to recommend:

- **Reducing per-serving THC limits to 5 mg**, consistent with emerging data on dose-response risks.
- **Prohibiting addictive additives** in cannabis products, such as synthetic nicotine or added caffeine, which can increase the risk of dependence.

Shatterproof strongly supports Senate Bill 56 and appreciates the Ohio legislature's thoughtful approach to cannabis regulation. However, we urge the House to restore statutory **THC caps** and **youth advertising protections** to ensure the law maintains robust, long-term public health standards.

Thank you for your attention and for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Leah Kaufman
Vice President, Public Policy
Shatterproof

ⁱ Bailey, J. A., Epstein, M., Roscoe, J. N., Oesterle, S., Kosterman, R., & Hill, K. G. (2020). Marijuana legalization and youth marijuana, alcohol, and cigarette use and norms. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 59(3), 309–316.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2020.04.008> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32654862/>

ⁱⁱ Hammond, C. J., Hyer, J. M., Boustead, A. E., Fristad, M. A., Steelesmith, D. L., Brock, G. N., Hasin, D. S., & Fontanella, C. A. (2023). Association between marijuana laws and suicide among 12- to 25-year-olds in the United States From 2000 to 2019. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, S0890-8567(23)00341-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2023.06.014>

ⁱⁱⁱ Marlene C. Lira, Rosalie Liccardo Pacula, Rosanna Smart, Seema Choksy Pessar, Jason Blanchette, Timothy S. Naimi, Cannabis Policies, Cannabis, and Opioids in Suicide and Undetermined Intent Death, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Volume 68, Issue 3, 2025, Pages 475-484, ISSN 0749-3797, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2024.11.009>