



Representative Terrence Upchurch

10th House District

Finance Committee

House Bill 382 Sponsor Testimony

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Allow cultivation, possession of marihuana; levy a tax

December 6th, 2022

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony regarding House Bill 382. There are far too many people locked up because of minor marihuana convictions, especially Black men and this is something that has been studied. According to Harvard Law Professor, Alexandra Natapoff, the vast majority of people who sweep through our criminal justice system are in fact not a “criminal” if we were to define these crimes by how violent their actions were.

We know once a person has a record, their life gets much harder. It is harder to obtain jobs, no job means no money, no money means not being able to provide for your family and this can lead a person back down a path of nonviolent crime (petty theft, drug distribution, etc.). By allowing the expungement of certain marihuana convictions we give people a second chance at life. President Biden urged states to pardon nonviolent drug offenders and even stated, “no one should be in jail just for using or possessing marijuana... this has upended too many lives and incarcerated people for conduct that many states no longer prohibit”.

Our own President understands that marijuana is not a violent crime and it should not be a crime at all. HB 382 will put an end to the demonization of marijuana. It will also allow the State to make money through the 10% tax and of course there will be some restrictions that will be made by the Department of Commerce.

HB 382 will bring families back to together, put money back into the State and allow for more productivity in the State of Ohio.

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to this important constituent protecting legislation.