

Honorable members of the Senate and House,

I stand before you, as a Registered Nurse, an Appalachian mother of 4, and a small business owner. I left my full time nursing job during the pandemic to grow and operate Modern Remedies, a family-owned hemp farm in East Central Ohio, with my husband Joey. I am aware you have 50 other problems to address within this bill at present, and level three operators are not a topic for now. However, I am here to share our concerns regarding Issue 2 and the amendments being considered regarding hemp farmers.

Hemp farmers and processors in Ohio have come together to form a coalition in an effort to see that we get priority access to level 3 cultivation and dispensary licenses similar to New York. We understand this may not be at the forefront of Issue 2, but it is essential for our industry's future. We as hemp farmers have worked intimately with this plant the last couple of years since Ohio has allowed us to in 2020. We're farmers... we know and respect the plant. We've navigated and understand the regulatory and testing processes. When you begin sorting out level 3 licensures, we would urge consideration for the hemp farmers who have endured their set of challenges. – I would be happy to discuss the challenges us hemp farmers have faced, but we don't have the time today.

Most importantly, we are also deeply concerned about the language in House Bill 86. Under Section 928.01, Lines 306-309, it reads "Any item containing more than five-tenths of a milligram of delta-9 THC per serving, two milligrams of delta-9 THC per package, or any other THC." This level is significantly below the amount to get people "high" if that is the true concern. This type of language could cause a business that my family and I have put our blood, sweat, and tears into to shut down, along with many other hemp related businesses. Although it was a tough decision to leave nursing, I knew I was still going to have the ability to help people. With our full spectrum products, we have had consumers tell us that they have been able to stop taking synthetic pharmaceuticals such as Gabapentin, Wellbutrin, and even relieve pain that opioids weren't able to help. With this new bill, it would cause all of our products to be restricted.

It's important to differentiate our hemp products from synthetic cannabinoids like Delta 8. We also acknowledge the issues surrounding Delta 9 by weight. We ask that our responsibly produced products do not be grouped with these. We have not used any synthetic cannabinoids in our products and should not be essentially punished. A saying we preach at our business is "our hemp is as natural as it comes out of the ground". We do not adulterate the plant in any way because it has potential for so many benefits just as it is. Our products are not used by people to get "high", but to find some type of relief whether it be from aches and pains or stresses of life.

We are open to further discussions and collaboration. It's imperative that any legislation considers the potential impacts on family-run farms and businesses within the hemp sector. Our aim is to ensure that our concerns are heard and addressed.

My husband and I, along with our fellow hemp farmers and processors, ask for your thoughtful consideration in your decision-making. The outcomes of these bills will significantly affect families like ours and the community we serve. We remain committed to sustainable and responsible hemp farming.

We also hope to continue contributing to Ohio's agricultural landscape and keeping revenue here in Ohio as opposed to products from California or overseas if this language were to be included.

It would be nice if farmers were able to cash in on this cash crop this go around.

Thank you to Representative Callender and Representative Hillyer for listening to the hemp farmers.

And thank you to all of you for listening and for considering our perspective, today.