

Testimony for Medicinal Marijuana Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen of this committee thank you for allowing me to speak with you. I am pleased that our state is finally taking a serious look at this legislature, and I completely support its passing. However, I have a few concerns of where the bill stands currently. I believe it is a very big mistake to not allow smokeable products. As that is the quickest form of use for cannabis to effectively treat many ailments. Patients who want to try cannabis instead of other pharmaceuticals should not have to wait upwards of thirty minutes to an hour to feel the effects of the plant. Many patients will completely overlook cannabis if it is only passed in legislation in edible form only, as many people suffer from malabsorption or other GI related issues that do not allow their digestive system to process and experience the full benefits of the plant. On this very topic I myself as a CBD business owner have had multiple customers tell me that if this bill passes the way it currently stands, they will be upset as edibles just don't work for them, even tinctures. A few different customers have confessed that they have tried THC tinctures in recreational states that just don't seem to work the way they'd hope they would have, as they stated even the pain that made them choose to try THC tinctures did not subside. Inhalation of cannabis works far better for many reasons. You can better accurately dose yourself, also as inhalation effects can be felt almost immediately. Inhalation is needed in many circumstances such as children that suffer from seizures and folks like a man I used to have as a customer but lost after the Shawnee county sheriffs office started raiding other stores for their products that contained federally legal amounts of THC that were smokeable. I had just opened my business, I was not at all aware of what I could sell and could not. For three years I watched vape stores and other stores all over the area sell these THC vapes that weren't Hemp derived or lab tested. Making me feel that someone needs to step up and offer quality products for Kansans because they are going to get these products regardless of them being tested as they are restless on the inaction from our state. I wanted to be accurate and play by all the rules so I went to calling around to see what I could carry in the store. I finally got directed to the Department of Agriculture. They told me as long as my products adhered to the federal farm bill of 2018s guidelines, I could sell them. I wasn't told smokable's are not allowed. So, as I had planned before I stocked my store with lab tested high quality Hemp products. Some of which were the Delta 8 Vape Cartridges. The man I'm referring to as the customer I no longer have came in one day after just having left the VA to see if anything in my store could possibly help him. This great man has lived in Kansas his whole life, he's served his country in the Viet Nam war and now has cancer. He has a cancer that has taken hold of his GI system and pharmaceuticals just don't work for him anymore. This was what he stated the first time he walked in. He told me, "Shane I haven't smoked pot since Viet Nam. I've never been a pot smoker, but now all the meds I take just don't help me the way the doctors say they should, even the meds to help me feel hungry so I can eat." His GI system was pushing the meds through his system to fast to absorb the medications. He told me he had saw the article about my new business and that we only sell lab tested product. He said to me, "I thought since I was in town I'd come by and try out some things from your store. I literally just want to feel better, I've been told I only have so much time left on this earth, and I don't want my last days to be nothing but pain and agony I've had enough of that in my life." I tried to push him towards the CBD and Gummies, but he knew what he wanted. He said, "I've tried the CBD and gummies from other stores, I came here to finally try a THC vape." He insisted that he just wanted the pain to stop and was willing to give anything a shot. He bought a few and called back later after he had made it home and was able to try out the product. Over

the phone he said, "I can't believe how great I feel. I just wanted to call you and thank you. I haven't felt this good in a long time." He would come in every time he came to town to go to the VA and stop in afterward for more Vape cartridges. Every time thanking me for being in business and finding quality product that worked. Then the Sheriffs department raided many other businesses around the area. I learned of this watching one of our local media stations reporting it and immediately removed my Delta 8 vapes from the store as I wanted to stay compliant and had no idea why this was happening. Maybe two days later the man came back for more Vapes, I told him I'm so sorry, but the laws have changed, and I can no longer carry those products. He sat down quietly and put his face in his hands not saying a word. He was defeated. He spoke up saying, "just when I was feeling better, they pull this on me." I did not know how to handle this mans pain at that point, as there was nothing else in the store that was going to help him. He said to me, "please let me know if anything changes, I really need those to get through my days." I didn't include this mans name as I haven't been able to get ahold of him for almost two months. I often wonder if that's because he's no longer on this Earth. Another man who is wheelchair bound Meryl Rayburn comes to my store and buys edibles. He is someone who has been on oxycodone for years. He is ready to start transitioning to another option that's not a pharmaceutical, so he doesn't have to feel so dependent on synthetic drugs. He does not like the idea of having to wait so long after eating an edible for his pain to subside. He confessed to me that he used to smoke, and it helped his pain just as good as the pain meds did, but no longer wanted to buy cannabis illegally as he couldn't risk losing his pain medication. I have so many other customers that may be younger or in different scenarios that are opioid dependent that tell me they would try using cannabis to help themselves to come off of opioids. These customers are a perfect example, that if done right, you folks could drastically curtail the opioid epidemic that plaques our state so badly. The Fentanyl issue that we currently have could be resolved by a plant that naturally grows on Earth. These folks have been told no on this topic for far to long. I have people from all walks of life come into the store. Conservative, Liberal, and Independent. All of which have the same opinion on the legalization of this plant. Its quite rare in today's political climate that you see something that conservatives and liberals actually agree on. These are voters. These are Kansans. They feel left out of what most all other states have already started to move towards in some manner. I understand that the folks who are against smokable probably come with good intentions, but I believe they completely misunderstand its use and effects. When it comes to smokable's lets not be naïve. If smokable's don't get written into law, it will stay as it already is and has been. It will continue to be widely available everywhere in our state on the black market which brings in zero tax revenue for the state. It's time to take this out of the hands of amateur's who don't pay taxes and regulate it with upstanding Kansas citizens who will pay the state that they love the tax revenues it deserves. And now we also have Missouri, and Oklahoma that are most definitely going to vote yes on recreational legalization. These states saw the true potential. They don't judge a person for having a beer after a hard days work, or a cigarette after eating, or gambling on their phones, and using cannabis in the form they so choose. We don't see a problem in those areas, but we do when it comes to cannabis. Why? We all know its all over the place and needs to be regulated. Hear this though, these other states are going to steal Kansas funds in the process. Kansans will flood into their states for this product. If we don't do something to make Kansans feel our state government supports their right to choose how they will use this product, they will do it on their own and money will leave our state and enrich those closest to us. Is that what we want? Or should we trust our citizens to make their own choices. It seems foolish to not make many changes to this bill and how it is currently written. We stand to lose quite a bit of tax revenue if we only do edibles and no smokable's, as folks

that want that once again will just take a Saturday drive to one of three surrounding states to get what they want. If you don't believe me investigate for yourselves, states with smokeable cannabis pull in far more tax revenue than states that have chose to go with this bills model of only edibles. One last thing that I believe is as important as all others is that the fees included in the licensing, and application process for manufacturers, distributors, and retailers that is currently listed in this bill should be drastically decreased in price. These high prices will most definitely draw in out of state interests who will completely dominate the market and not at all help our state revenue in the same amount as it would if it were to stay in the hands of small Kansas owned businesses. That way the profits that are made in Kansas stay in Kansas. If we allow out of state interests to come in those profits will leave our state, not help it. Why should that be the case? This bill if written correctly could do things like help us lower property taxes and expand Medicaid. Keeping this industry, a Kansas industry, built to boost small businesses is the route to go if we really want a true example of what legalization could do for the state of Kansas. I really appreciate your time! I truly hope my testimony has had an impact on your views of how this bill currently sits and what truly needs to be done to benefit the people in Kansas that need Medicinal Marijuana in all forms not just edibles. I hope that you will do what's right for the people of Kansas. And with a renewed sense of urgency. Because I would hate to hear one more story or have to personally deal with another person suffering who wants cannabis but can't get it here. Remember who put this plant on this Earth. If it wasn't meant for us, then it wouldn't be here.