



MEMORANDUM

To: Sen. Chuck Riley, Chair, Senate Committee on Business & General Government
Sen. Fred Girod, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Business & General Government
Members of the Senate Committee on Business & General Government

From: Courtni Dresser, Director of Government Relations

Date: February 28, 2019

Re: SB 639

The Oregon Medical Association represents over 8,000 physicians, physician assistants, and medical physician assistant students in Oregon, and is concerned about the negative impacts SB 639 will have on our members' vision of a healthy Oregon. We stand behind policy that supports healthy individuals, systems and environments. We cannot support SB 639.

SB 639 raises concerns about employee rights to indoor clean air, normalization of youth use of cannabis, and the inability of potential temporary events and cannabis lounge licensees to measure consumption and impairment of attendees in a safe and consistent manner.

The Oregon Indoor Clean Air Act (ICAA) protects the public, venue patrons, and employees from risks associated with exposure to second-hand smoke by prohibiting smoking or vaping indoors where people work, public places, and within 10 feet of all entrances, exits, ramps to an entrance or exit, windows that open, and air-intake vents. Exemptions to the ICAA, as contained in SB 639 for cannabis, will expose Oregonians to harmful second-hand smoke. A clinical guidelines workgroup, established through HB 4014 (2016), strongly opposed smoking marijuana as a method of delivery "because of harms associated with inhaling any kind of smoke."¹ Furthermore, a recent survey of Oregon adults showed 83% agree that people should be protected from secondhand smoke outside.

As advocates for adolescent health, the OMA has an obligation to protect the health and well-being of youth and work to ensure the protection of Oregon's youth from exposure to cannabis. The most recent Oregon Healthy Teens Survey shows that the perception of harm from marijuana is decreasing among Oregon's teens and that teens already view marijuana as easy to access². Normalizing the use of marijuana through social consumption sends the wrong message to our youth and increases the likelihood they will seek out cannabis. We should not be expanding access to cannabis before we have adequately addressed, and put into place, prevention-based policies and programs. Many of the challenges about how to regulate cannabis and handle the current marketplace have not yet been answered and this is where focus should be at this time.

¹ <http://public.health.oregon.gov/PreventionWellness/marijuana/Documents/OHA-9262-Attending-Physician-Guidelines.pdf>

² https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/BIRTHDEATHCERTIFICATES/SURVEYS/OREGONHEALTHYTEENS/Documents/2017/2017_OHT_State_Report.pdf

A unique challenge to cannabis is measuring impairment. Unlike alcohol, there is not a standard measurement and way to test for impairment. Until this issue is addressed and “impairment” is better defined, it would be irresponsible to promote public consumption. Public consumption increases the risk for accident and injury to others and this bill does not address the responsibility and liability of monitoring impairment when serving cannabis.

The OMA urges your opposition to SB 639.

The Oregon Medical Association serves and supports over 8,000 physicians, physician assistants and student members in their efforts to improve the health of all Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.