



Public Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 639

Chair Riley and members of the Senate Committee On Business and General Government:

The legalization of cannabis is working. Oregonians can now buy it more safely. Oregon regulators have more control of what is sold and where. Cannabis consumers are purchasing cannabis that has been tested for impurities and labeled with its potency. Thousands of new jobs have been created. The taxes have generated tens of millions in new revenue, more than doubling the largest government estimates when the economic impact of Measure 91 was first projected. Cannabis arrests and citations have plummeted and police resources have been freed up to tackle serious crimes. Polling by the firm DHM found that more voters supported legalization than the 56% that first voted to end prohibition in 2014.

However, the work is not done and Senate Bill 639 is a next step in the progression towards sensible cannabis policies that create jobs and generate revenue for our state. Too many Oregonians don't have access to a safe place to consume cannabis because of where they live. The poorest and the sickest are hurt the worst by lease agreements that prohibit the use of cannabis. It's time to change that, using the same approach that's already worked: legalization, regulation, and taxation.

By legalizing, regulating, and taxing licensed establishments for Oregonians to consume cannabis, Oregonians will have safer places to consume it, and they are more likely to consume it in places where they are legally allowed. Regulators will have more control over where marijuana is consumed and what Oregonians are consuming. Oregon can generate even more tax revenue and create even more jobs.

Opponents of cannabis legalization cried that the sky was going to fall if Measure 91 passed and many of those same opponents are saying the same things to oppose Senate Bill 639. With local control and practical regulations in place, such as proper ventilation and mandatory training, SB 639 is a win-win. The concerns that opponents of SB 639 have are best addressed by regulation, not continuing failed prohibition policies.

Respectfully,

Anthony Johnson
New Revenue Coalition