

OR Cannabis Equity Act Written Testimony | Leah Maurer

Chair Bynum and the Honorable Members of the House Committee On Judiciary,

My name is Leah Maurer, and I am a cannabis activist and one of the owners of theweedblog.com, one of the top cannabis news and information sites worldwide. Additionally, I was one of the spokespeople for the Measure 91 campaign back in 2014, founding a group called “Moms for YES on Measure 91” which proved to be pivotal in the passage of the measure that granted adult-use cannabis legalization in our state. Since that moment, I have worn multiple hats in both the Oregon cannabis advocacy and industry sectors and have pushed for a socially responsible and ethical industry every step of the way, which is part of what led me to become involved with the Oregon Cannabis Equity Act, or HB 3112.

I am writing to urge your support of HB 3112 for several reasons.

In my work as both an activist and a journalist, I have found that states have left equity completely out of any cannabis legalization legislation. In the past couple of years, only a few places in the U.S. have worked for cannabis social equity programs with little success in what they set out for. The Oregon Cannabis Equity Act stands to not only better serve the state of Oregon, but also to set precedent for the rest of the United States.

The Oregon Cannabis Equity Act provides services and support in all areas that have been left out of the legislative cannabis conversation for far too long, and we need to correct this NOW, as Oregon is positioned to continue to lead both cannabis legislation and the legalized cannabis industry moving forward. It is imperative that it is passed and implemented correctly under the oversight board it will create.

Data shows that Black, Indigenous and Latina/o/x communities have been arrested, primarily for cannabis possession, between 2 and 3.5 times higher rates versus white Oregonians. This is despite health data showing similar rates of cannabis consumption across all races and ethnicities. The tax revenue created by the cannabis industry has the opportunity to repair harm directly in the communities most harmed by cannabis criminalization.

Please support the Oregon Cannabis Equity Act, HB 3112, for a better Oregon, and for a better humanity overall. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Leah Maurer