

Good morning Chair Golden, Vice Chair Kennemer, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. For the record, my name is Dylan Summers, and I am here as an industry representative as President of the Association of Western Hemp Professionals, representing business in Oregon as well as members in four other western states. I am also here as a business representative on behalf of Lazarus Naturals, a vertically integrated hemp and hemp product company with facilities across Oregon, including manufacturing and office facilities in Portland as well as nearly 250 licensed acres in Crook County. AWHP and Lazarus would like to express its OPPOSITION to Senate Bill 1564, as it is written. More specifically, the proposed hemp moratorium.

Committee members, our association is a bit perplexed as to why a hemp license moratorium is being proposed at a time when so many have recently pulled away from growing hemp in Oregon and prior bills have seemingly addressed recent deficiencies of the state's hemp program. We are hearing that this proposed moratorium is a reaction to the issues in the Southern part of the state concerning illegal hemp operations and the like. But we are confused why honest businesspeople should suffer because of the abuses of the rules by a handful of dishonest actors. The ODA has done well to establish a legal Oregon hemp program, one which suffices the prescriptions of the USDA. Further, this legislature has done well to tighten enforcement with the prior session's HB 3000. It was our understanding that the issues are already being addressed and the proper mechanisms have been established to confront them. Not least of which includes the establishment of the Task Force on Cannabis-Derived Intoxicants. Our association asks that this unnecessary hemp license moratorium be struck from 1564, and that the Task Force is able to solve the problems it has been tasked with, the problems that a crude and baseless hemp license moratorium would only attempt to address, but would likely have formidable consequences.

Furthermore, committee members, as a licensed Oregon hemp business, Lazarus Naturals is equally perplexed by the hemp license moratorium and stands to suffer needlessly because of it. Lazarus Naturals is an upstanding enterprise which has honored the ODA rules since establishing hemp business operations in Oregon in 2015 and has not a single blemish to its name with authorities. This hemp license moratorium would punish us by restricting our ability to expand farming operations or pivoting to contract farming for specialized hemp needs like we have had to do in the past. Ultimately, who suffers most are the farmers who will lose the opportunity to collaborate with us or who wish to exercise their rights to capitalize on emergent hemp farming opportunities—especially considering that hemp is not just a cannabinoid crop, but is likely to develop into a major commodity with the potential to disrupt feed stock, building material, and textile markets.

We cordially request that this committee vote 1564 down, or at least strike the hemp license moratorium from its provisions.

Thank you for your time.