

Submitter: Rick Dyer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Public Safety
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5005

February 13, 2025

Written Testimony of Rick Dyer
before the
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Public Safety
in favor of
House Bill 5005 and the Dash-1 Amendments

Dear Co-Chairs Broadman and Evans, Senators Campos and Brock Smith, and Representatives Chotzen, Grayber, Helfrich, and Lewis,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Rick Dyer, and I am a Jackson County Commissioner. In 2021, I was serving as the Chair of the Board when I personally announced the state of emergency declaration due to the negative impacts of illegal marijuana activity in our county. During that time, Jackson County was overtaken by criminal actors, severely overwhelming our capacity to adequately address the challenges posed by illicit drug operations.

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 5005 and the accompanying Dash-1 Amendments, which ensure continued funding for the Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant Program (IMMEGP). The programs supported by this funding are essential for our ongoing efforts to combat the severe consequences of illegal cannabis grows in our region.

Thanks to the funding provided by the IMMEGP, our county has mobilized an entire network of agencies that have collaborated seamlessly to make substantial improvements to the situation. This collective effort has proven invaluable in tackling the complexities of illegal marijuana operations. Law enforcement, local government, state agencies, and community organizations have come together, employing a unified approach to address the daunting issues that have plagued our county.

Notably, Jackson County Code Enforcement has been a critical partner in this initiative. Their proactive engagement with law enforcement has allowed us to comprehensively address not only the illegal grows themselves but also the associated environmental and public safety concerns. By working hand-in-hand, these agencies have leveraged their strengths and resources, achieving outcomes

that would have been impossible without such collaboration. The coordination created by the funding has been a vital component of our success in reducing illegal activities and ensuring the safety of our community.

While we have made significant strides in curtailing illegal marijuana activity, the situation remains very tenuous. Bad actors are still poised to return, and if we cannot maintain the levels of enforcement activity that the IMMEGP has enabled, we risk losing the progress we have made. If this activity is allowed to take hold again, it will necessitate a considerable investment of resources far exceeding what is currently required to keep it at bay. Furthermore, the impact on communities is profound, as it perpetuates human trafficking, human rights abuses, and significantly deteriorates both quality of life and environmental conditions. The toll on those victimized by these actions cannot be overstated, as they endure immense suffering and disruption to their lives.

The Dash-1 Amendments are crucial to secure continued funding at the Current Service Level, ensuring that our multi-agency network can remain effective in confronting these adversities.

I urge you to prioritize the passage of House Bill 5005 and the Dash-1 Amendments. Your support will reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding our community from the detrimental effects of illegal marijuana activity and will help us in maintaining public safety and order in Jackson County.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing issue and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Rick Dyer
Jackson County Commissioner