

2/09/2026

Dear Senate Early Childhood and Behavioral Health Committee Members,

I'm writing in support of SB 1548 to restrict cannabis edibles to be packaged individually, limit the amount of THC in each item, and to add warning labels to inform consumers of the harmful nature of these products. I have been a certified drug and alcohol counselor since 2007 and have watched the impact of cannabis edibles become more harmful over the years. When recreational cannabis was legalized, we have seen the steady decline in perception of the risk of cannabis use, especially in youth. We have also seen an increase in emergency department visits of small children that have taken cannabis edibles that were left out because they look like candy. The potency of these edibles can be very high and easily reach a point of toxicity when ingested by a small child. Here is a summary of the effects on young children:

Immediate Physical and Neurological Effects

Symptoms of THC ingestion typically appear within one hour, last for several hours, and can include:

- **Central Nervous System Depression:** Extreme drowsiness, lethargy, and profound, unresponsive sleep.
- **Respiratory Distress:** Slowed, labored, or stopped breathing (apnea), requiring ventilation in severe cases.
- **Neurological Impairment:** Poor coordination, dizziness, inability to walk or sit up, seizures, and in extreme cases, coma.
- **Gastrointestinal Distress:** Vomiting and nausea.
- **Cardiovascular Changes:** Fast or slow heart rate and changes in blood pressure.
- **Psychological Effects:** Hallucinations, confusion, panic, and agitation.

The way cannabis is marketed and distributed, made to look like candy but having high potency is irresponsible and harmful to the youth in our state. As a professional working in this field for many years I have seen so many instances of harm from high potency cannabis to youth. In the treatment programs that I oversee we regularly treat youth with symptoms of psychosis, hyper emesis (inability to stop vomiting), severe depression, anxiety, and suicidality. The common denominator for these youth is almost always a severe cannabis use disorder. Before I came to work at Madrona Recovery I worked for Kaiser Permanente for 12 years. Much of that time I worked closely with teams in the Sunnyside hospital and witnessed cases of cannabis toxicity in small children and adolescents.

We have failed youth and children in the way that we are managing cannabis sales and marketing in our state. We must do better.

Sincerely,

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