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**Sent:** Thursday, April 30, 2015 1:55 PM  
**To:** Crawford Adam  
**Subject:** Testimony on Senate Bill 844

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I am the Executive Director of Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse (MAMA), a nonprofit, educational organization. I have worked closely with the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program (OMMP) since its inception. I served on the OMMP Administrative Work Group and then was appointed to the Advisory Committee on Medical Marijuana (ACMM) when it was formed and still serve today.

MAMA has existed since 1982, teaching people how to make decisions to reduce the harm from any drug use. MAMA has operated medical marijuana clinics in Bend, Portland and The Dalles to help people with the process of registering for the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program and to help them understand the use of medical marijuana and the rules of the Program. We are in our 11<sup>th</sup> year of providing these services.

When the OMMP was started, there was a communal feeling about medical marijuana. In the beginning, most people smoked or ate it. They had to produce their own cannabis, either by growing it themselves or by getting someone, who they couldn't pay for their labor, to grow it for them. It was thrilling to see so many people come together to help each other.

Patients took on this effort by themselves, with little or no help from the OMMP, who insisted they were just a licensing agency. We could not get help with any research or patient education on harm reduction. MAMA still does its best to teach people how to weigh the risks and benefits of cannabis use.

We remain concerned about the lack of attention to educating all of those who will actually consume the cannabis. I will be happy to provide MAMA's basic approach to cannabis use harm reduction on request.

For many years the most wonderful cooperative effort kept many people supplied with medicine, but there was always the problem for people who couldn't have it produced, or who needed the medicine right away and didn't have time to produce it. So many people stepped up to help, as they could.

Then came the vote on the dispensaries that failed. Shortly prior to the vote and since that time, many 'outlaw' dispensaries opened, with obscure rules. Many cardholders were uncomfortable with this and wanted a legal avenue to purchase cannabis medicine. We were happy to see the regulated medical marijuana dispensaries open.

Patients are just now getting comfortable with this way of obtaining their medicine in its many forms. Still other patients prefer to grow their own so that they can have the strains that they need or so that the growing conditions are what they want, much as some people prefer to grow their own food. These small person medical gardens in my opinion, should be able to operate without intrusion of

the government. Reporting (record keeping for 7 years!) will be awkward and may lead many who are willing to grow for other patients to stop doing so.

We hear that most of the medicine from the OMMP is going to the black market. In my experience that is not true. Not only do people provide for their own needs, but many patients still share, for no consideration, with those in need. Patients, growers and caregivers regularly prepare cannabis products and share with other patients. If the prices are kept reasonable, I believe that most people would prefer to buy cannabis from a store where they can be certain that of what they are buying, because it has all been tested. This is the reason that cities and counties should respect the original wording of the passed law and limit taxing, so that the prices are not driven too high, tempting people toward the black market.

Once the over - 21 dispensaries are in place and established, and patients can dependably get the cannabis medicine that they need, then perhaps that will be the time to combine the medical and adult use. Until that time, please keep in mind the special needs of patients and protect them.

Requiring people to have lived 4 years in Oregon before they can grow their own cannabis, seems very restrictive. Do they have to wait to make their own beer or wine?

Inspections of small medical grows is overly intrusive and costly. These should not be required. Are these not warrantless searches. Do we have the same for those who produce wine or beer for themselves, or for sale to others?

Why should the government be allowed to be so heavy handed about this, when the same kind of rules do not apply to people who grow the grapes and hops to make their own wine and beer. Alcohol is much more dangerous than marijuana.

Small gardens should be allowed in residential areas. To do otherwise would create a burden for many medical marijuana patients, who grow their own medicine at home.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my concerns,

Sandee Burbank