

Testimony from Helen Ying for SB 1511-4

February 12, 2016

Dear Representative Linninger, Senator Burdick, and Members of the Joint Committee on Marijuana Legalization,

My name is Helen Ying, I am the Chair of Big Village, a coalition of diverse partners working to reduce youth substance abuse in Multnomah County. I am also a retired Vice Principal, an educator for 30 years and am currently a hearings officer for Reynolds and Parkrose School Districts.

Marijuana is a huge issue for our schools, I increasingly see youth who are dealing with the negative consequences of marijuana use and school staff are struggling to provide effective prevention and intervention. Edibles are particularly concerning because of their potential appeal to youth, their ability to go undetected at school, and the delayed onset that may cause inexperienced users (kids) to take large doses before the effect of the THC is felt, resulting in dangerously high dosage consumption.

I strongly urge you to ban the establishments of **Cannabis cafes for the following reasons:**

1) **In support of the Clean Air Act:**

- The State of Oregon has instituted laws to ban smoking cigarettes in public spaces including restaurants and bars to ensure and promote better health for all. We need to keep step with that action and ban smoking marijuana in public spaces in the same manner.

2) **Protect our youth by decreasing risk factors: availability, visibility, and advertisement.**

- Studies have shown that availability, visibility, and advertisement have been factors that affected increase use of alcohol and related products among youth. It is imperative that as we make laws in the implementation stage of marijuana legalization that we make every effort to protect our youth by decreasing the risk factors.
- Advertising such as green cross signs are already ubiquitous in our communities, if we add cannabis cafes too, our neighborhood make-up will suggest to youth that using marijuana is common or the "norm", as common as coffee shops.

Finally, I urge you to support: banning the establishments of cannabis cafes and increase funding for a public education campaign to help the general public understand the impact of marijuana use and in particular in regards to the brain development of youth and young adults. According to lessons learned from the Colorado youth media campaign and the state's recent focus groups, it is clear that instead of a pilot we need a comprehensive state-wide youth prevention campaign ASAP - especially since edibles are likely going to be available through the Early Start program very soon.

Sincerely,

Helen Ying

Discover2010@gmail.com

503-803-4555