

Hello Joint Committee on Marijuana Regulation Members,

I am a small medical grower. I grow 12 mature plants for 2 medical patients. I do not have a million dollars to buy a farm. Indeed, the vast majority of us 6-24 plant growers will never have the financial resources needed to buy even the smallest of farms. But that does not mean that we shouldn't have the right to earn a living. In the new "gig" economy of Uber driving and AirBnBs, many people in the lower social-economic tiers of society are required to wear many hats and do many jobs. In order to survive, we often have to cobble together a number of jobs just to pay for the necessities that many people in the middle and upper classes take for granted. Growing for medical patients and selling our excess into the legal marketplace should be just as much available to the minorities and working poor of the cities and towns as it is to the new Margolis INC Cartel and Chalice Chain robber barons that are popping up their massive greenhouses like giant warts in the beautiful Oregon countryside.

I do support the language originally in HB2198 to allow ALL small medical growers access to the legal marketplace. I think it should be on equal footing as the new Giant OLCC growers, and we should not be forcibly channeled through the shady wholesalers and processors that have a reputation for no good business practices that leave the small producers with nothing. In my opinion, it would be better to allow the small 6-48 plant OMMP growers to use the METRC system and pay the \$480/year then to force them through these wholesalers that take a 25% cut of the wholesale price straight off the top. This will only serve to discourage the small growers from participating in the legal marketplace. I want to remind everyone that the hundreds of existing Retailers had no problem buying directly from the thousands of medical growers in 2015-2016. And in the current time, fear of losing their OLCC license would certainly prevent them from diverting product to the black market.

To the arguments being put forward that Wholesalers would do the testing and take out for taxes: 1) The testing results are necessary to negotiate a price for the crop, and so no grower wants to hand over their crop to a wholesaler, who then has the upperhand in determining what the price should be pending the test results. Also, no wholesaler is going to buy a crop until it's proven that it has passed the pesticide testing. So most likely, the grower is still going to have to do the testing. 2) As to additional taxes, I would like everyone to remember that the Medical growers are already paying a tax in the form of the 25-40% of the crop that we are providing free to our patients, as well as in the form of the grow site fees we pay to the OHA each year to subsidize the other unrelated state medical programs. The massive OLCC Rec growers do not provide ANY such free product to patients, nor do they pay any fees to the OHA to support Oregon's Healthcare programs. Even with the OLCC "bump-up" going into place, I highly doubt that very many of the OLCC Mega-Growers will abandon their wanton profiteering in order to serve the thousands of medical patients that have already lost their growers, plus the thousands more that will lose their growers if the current trajectory is not altered.

Additionally, I would like small medical growers to remain on equal footing with the large growers in terms of not having caps on their immature plant counts. That is only fair. There are just too many medical patients and growers who are not able to do their own cloning, and thus need access to affordable clones from the other medical growers.

Finally, I absolutely do not support the amendments being proposed that would freeze out growers of 12 plants and less. These proposals force the 6- and 12-plant growers to either quit growing for patients, or to sell their excess to the black market in order to survive. It is wrong and unfair to lock out and/or criminalize the smallest 6- and 12-plant mom-and-pop growers so that a handful of multimillionaire Wall Street cartel growers can profit off the people of Oregon. If these gigantic Agribusinesses can't compete using the massive economies of scale inherent in their stadium sized greenhouses, then they should not be in business. Instead of worrying about the new Margolis, INC. Cartel, I ask you to put the 20,000+ Oregon OMMP growers and 100,000+ Oregon OMMP patients first. When these small growers are allowed to participate in the system, the money they make goes straight from their pockets into the local economies around them, not back to the millionaire Carpet Baggers and Hedge Funds of New York City and Los Angeles.

Thank you for your time and consideration. -Bob Toole, West Linn, Oregon