
From: Anna Symonds <anna@selfmadefarms.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 7:21 PM
To: JMR Exhibits
Subject: Re: written testimony - HB 2198

To clarify, our opposition is not to the whole of 2198, but to the part in -17 that would allow medical growers to transfer up to 20 pounds into the recreational system.

Thank you!

On May 16, 2017 5:06 PM, "Anna Symonds" <anna@selfmadefarms.com> wrote:

attached as a .doc and also pasted below

Hello Committee, I'm Anna Symonds and I'm a manager at Self Made Farms. We are an OLCC-licensed producer with two farm sites in Jackson County, and an OLCC-licensed Wholesaler in Portland, which allows us to partner with other small farms to sell and distribute their product.

Our company is 100% owned by an Oregon married couple, Steve and Catherine Self, who run it hands-on. They have put their life savings as well as all of their personal credit into starting this business. With Steve's years of experience as a medical grower, they decided to take the plunge last spring and enter into the recreational market.

Though most of our gardens have already transitioned from the medical system to the recreational system or are currently in the process, we do still have some involvement with medical grows. We provide medicine for patients with serious illnesses, and many qualify as low-income. The bump up provision is a great option that is relatively new, and we do hope to use it in the near future. However, it will take time to implement.

We oppose HB 2198 from our standpoint as both medical and recreational growers. Regulation is important in our industry, and Oregon has a very strong framework of rules in place. Our business has spent significant funds and countless hours just on licensing and compliance. In fact, those projects have been the bulk of my job for the past year. And though we first applied for our City Wholesale license in June 2016, we still have only a temporary Certificate of Occupancy at our Portland warehouse. The City building permit has been a lengthy process with many detailed requirements, all of which take time and money.

To meet licensing requirements at the State, County, and City levels, we've required the consulting services of land use permitting professionals, a water rights surveyor, an architect, an engineer, and an attorney. We've invested a significant amount in our security systems and alarm monitoring services. We've had to hire electricians, plumbers, and HVAC technicians to upgrade and permit our systems in order to meet building code requirements for licensing. These expenses are all on top of the regular costs of growing our crop.

I have no doubt that HB 2198 is well intentioned. However, it would punish the people who have bought in and committed most to seed-to-sale regulation, and who have invested the most in complying. There also isn't a shortage of licensees to provide product in the recreational market - in fact, the opposite, as OLCC is currently working its way through thousands of new license applications that have already been submitted. As a new industry, our fledgling businesses are facing a lot of up front costs and financial demands, and this is the worst possible time to take an action that would further drive down the price of our crop. The people who have put everything they have into these small businesses and committed to OLCC requirements deserve a level playing field in the market.

In summary, there is simply no need for medical cannabis to enter and erode the recreational market that we have so carefully built. The medical program has served a crucial need in our state, and we do expect that program to evolve. However, we must respect the livelihoods of the Oregonians who have stuck out their necks to start this industry, and we must have the patience to let the market mature naturally as it was designed.

Thank you so much for your consideration of these important issues.