

Chair Riley and members of the committee, I write today in support of Senate Bill 639.

I am a medical cannabis patient. For decades - since my early 20's - I thought I would never touch cannabis again. I am sure many of my generation, before regulation and the understanding of the substance we have now, have had negative experiences with cannabis. Or, we have seen friends with negative experiences, often due to a lack of understanding of the potency or effects of cannabis. (Knowledge in this area is now improving as more research takes place around interactions, effectiveness for specific ailments, and proper dosage.)

A few years ago, I had hip replacement surgery. The recovery was long, the narcotics I was prescribed made me ill, and over the counter pain medication gave no meaningful pain relief. I needed to sleep, I needed to rest without pain. That was the first time I had tried cannabis since legalization. It helped me get the rest I needed.

As my recovery from surgery went on, I experienced a negative side effect - restless leg syndrome. I tried many over the counter options to help me sleep. When I consulted with my doctor, I was informed that Tylenol PM, Benadryl, etc. might help me sleep for awhile, but they actually exacerbate the restless leg syndrome over time. That is why I would wake up after four hours and be unable to fall asleep again. A family member suggested talking to a dispensary about what I was experiencing, and should I find relief, seek a medical cannabis card. I went to a dispensary in Portland, talked through what I experienced and what I hoped to accomplish. The staff was clear that they were not a pharmacist or medical doctor, and gave me clear information about what strains and classifications of cannabis I may find helpful. I started sleeping well again.

After that successful experience, I sought a medical cannabis card, and have found a regimen that helps me rest well, without taking medication that exacerbates my condition. Since this positive experience, I have encountered more women in my life - even through my church - who have benefited substantially from access to cannabis.

What I recognize, however, is the unique position I have because I own my home. It is simple for me to consume cannabis and not fear repercussions. I came from humble beginnings and spent many years as a renter. I have a child who is a renter, and many of her peers are renters. Some of them are also medical cannabis patients. I do not see a reason why these individuals should not be allowed a place to use cannabis in a legal establishment without fear of legal repercussions. Homeowners can consume any legal substance they like on their property. It is equitable to provide a safe and legal space for consumption for renters. While I believe this to be especially fair for medical cannabis patients, I know many, like I once did, use cannabis for legitimate medical reasons but without a medical card. In addition to having the privilege of owning my home, I also have the privilege of being able to afford the cost of obtaining a medical card.

Senate Bill 639 ensures that cannabis consumers have a safe place to consume a legal substance that is becoming increasingly normalized. I am very grateful that the

cannabis industry is finding innovative ways to make the product approachable, as I have directly benefited from that progress. If I were a renter, I would be very afraid of putting my home at risk and would lose out on the benefits of cannabis that I have experienced.

Therefore, I ask your support for Senate Bill 639, and I appreciate the committee's attention to this legislation.

Respectfully,

Annette Mattson
East Portland Resident