

To: The Honorable Chair Representative Lively, Vice Chair Representative Bonham, Vice-Chair Fahey and Members of the House Economic Development Committee

From: Cynthia Gaffney - Independent Media Producer and Drug Law Reform Advocate

RE: Position statement on HB 2233 and SB 639 related to social cannabis consumption

My name is Cynthia Gaffney. I am an independent web media producer. My work has covered the healthcare industry, artisan food makers, and ending the war on drugs.

I have lived in Oregon for the past four years and have followed cannabis legalization here starting with the Proposition 91 campaign through the OLCC rulemaking process and into the 2017 Joint Committee hearings.

As a result of those hearings, I produced a short documentary on a group of medical growers and discovered that their sense of community, which has a longstanding tradition of monthly gatherings, is at least, if not more, beneficial to their well being as the plant itself. And it is this fundamental human need for acceptance in a community that brings me here today to speak in general support of cannabis consumption events and ongoing establishments.

I have been a soccer/hockey mom, a technology professional, an executive board member of non-profit foundations, and have used marijuana my entire adult life. The need to bring cannabis consumption out of dark alleys and into the light of everyday life is critical in the struggle to de-stigmatize those who use it. Indeed, cannabis prohibition itself has been the real crime.

To those who express concerns about “normalization”, I submit that cannabis normalization is the only just resolution to decades of unjust politically motivated criminalization. In fact, those concerns, as they involve fear of negative influence on children, may be better directed to the now “über-normalization” of conspicuous alcohol consumption in public supermarkets.

From my work with handmade food producers, I know that introducing the world to Oregon cannabis through convivial public events and consumption spaces will not only bolster it but all of Oregon’s artisan comestible industries. The consumer market is ready and waiting. While the need to redress politically motivated discrimination is long overdue.

Please support cannabis consumption events and ongoing establishments.

Thank you for your dedication to the democratic process.

~Cynthia Gaffney