

March 11, 2021



Rep. Janelle Bynum, Chair House Judiciary
Reps. Ron Noble & Karin Power, Vice-Chairs
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Chair Bynum and the Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Andreas Moppin, Founder and CEO of Osanyin Consulting, LLC. I am also an Executive Board Member at the Urban League of Portland, the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge for the States of Oregon, Idaho and Montana, Inc. F. & A.M., and a graduate of Morehouse College. It has been a pleasure to meet you in the past Congresswoman Bynum and I truly appreciate your support for The Oregon Cannabis Equity Act – HB 3112.

I would like to share with you some of the personal connections I have to this legislative act and why I support it.

Some six to nine months ago I joined the workgroup that drafted this bill as a representative of the Urban League of Portland. I have served as the Treasurer there over the past five years. Our CEO Nkenge Harmon Johnson is very familiar with my work within the cannabis industry in Oregon and the West Coast.

Five years ago I left a very leadership position in the food industry to join the medical cannabis program in Oregon – full of excitement and energy to not only accept my first position as an Officer and Vice President at the leading cannabis company in the state at the time, but to also blaze a path in a new industry – facilitating legalization by providing sales, marketing, distribution and marketing expertise from the consumer packaged goods industry and other agricultural businesses, that were much needed in the state of Oregon. We were all working together here in Oregon to not only provide medicine to those who truly needed it to improve their lives but to also bring an end to the racist and discriminatory persecution of many people – of all ethnicities, who had been imprisoned due to their affiliations with cannabis.

I have led the most diverse cannabis teams in the state of Oregon, Washington, Nevada and California. I have worked for the largest players in our state as an executive. And I have been involved in taking two cannabis companies public – their stocks are now traded.

Over the years I have become increasingly frustrated as the industry has moved from a grassroots movement to one that is now saturated by individuals who have recently joined the “Green Rush”, no longer attached to the original mission and who have also brought along the same racist and discriminatory practices from other industries into cannabis. Making it very hard for Black, Brown and Indigenous people to succeed and at times to even gain employment at all...

Due to these factors I resigned from my position at one of the world's largest cannabis companies to create my own company – focused on education and the entrepreneurial charge of Black and Brown people nationwide – both in the areas of cannabis and food distribution. And it is because of these experiences that I support The Oregon Cannabis Equity Act – HB 3112.

It is very important to our community that we not only automatically expunge past cannabis criminal charges – so that applicants for employment can be confident in their interviews and gain employment, but also that we obtain our own cannabis licenses, to facilitate competition with those who have no interest in hiring us – creating our own paths to wealth and economic independence. Too many times in the past, within this industry, it has been people like myself and those who I have led, that have taken on the risks – putting ourselves in harm's way, carrying hundreds of thousands of dollars to the safe, and managing both cultivation and retail operations – in environments where we were worried about criminal activities as well as law enforcement. We have made millions of dollars for large corporations and we were either not recognized or we were not compensated correctly for our success while others took the fame. We are confident and ready to engage in this industry. We just need the opportunity.

While the cannabis industry of Oregon captured some \$1Billion dollars in revenue in the year 2020, only a handful of license holders were Black, Brown or Indigenous. It's time to shift this paradigm.

Thank you for your support of this very important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Andreas Moppin
CEO of Osanyin Consulting, LLC