



Testimony in Support of SB 347
May 12, 2025

Chair Meek, Vice Chair McLane and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kate Suisman. I am an attorney at the Northwest Workers' Justice Project (NWJP). Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony on this important bill. We represent workers in low-wage jobs when bad things happen to them at work: when they are not paid, or are discriminated against for being in a protected class or are retaliated against for speaking up. Finally, we engage in policy advocacy and try to bring the important perspectives of workers in low-wage jobs and immigrant workers to these policy discussions.

I write in strong support of SB 347, and I thank Senator David Brock Smith for bringing it forward. I know his district has been heavily impacted by the illegal marijuana crisis our state has been experiencing. In response to this crisis, NWJP and six other community groups stood up a new program called the Cannabis Worker Resilience Partnership (CWRP) in 2023. I have also submitted a flyer on the Partnership's work so far where you can see that CWRP has helped over 1000 workers with legal consultation and humanitarian services to date. We know how big of a problem illegal marijuana continues to be in our state. And we know we need all the tools at our disposal to tackle this problem.

SB 347 will send a strong message to landowners who rent to illegal cannabis businesses. Right now, there is little disincentive to renting land to these unscrupulous businesses. This bill will make landowners think twice about entering into agreements without doing their due diligence on who they are renting to, and what their tenant plans to do with the land. But it also protects unwitting landowners by allowing a carve-out for landowners who reasonably lacked knowledge of the illegal activity, and for those that notify law enforcement about the illegal activity when they find out about it.

The consequence of losing one's special tax status should cause landowners to take notice and do their homework before renting their land out. However I do want to point out that this bill does not address the impact to workers who are labor trafficked or lured into working on these illegal grows under false pretense. More work is needed on remedies for the workers suffering during this humanitarian crisis. But SB 347 is an excellent step to reducing the amount of land available to grow illegal cannabis.

Please join community members and advocates in support. Thank you very much.

