

Submitter: Samuel Romero
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Economic Development, Small
Business, and Trade
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1548

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding this legislation.

The bill cites a New York Times article as supporting evidence for its proposed restrictions. However, that article has been widely criticized for factual inaccuracies, selective omissions, and unsupported assertions that mischaracterize the current body of scientific research regarding cannabis. Public policy, particularly when it affects public health, patient access, and regulated industries, must be grounded in reliable, comprehensive, and peer-reviewed evidence rather than contested media narratives.

Protecting minors is a shared and essential priority. However, cannabis should not be subjected to a regulatory standard that is inconsistent with how other age-restricted substances are treated. Underage alcohol consumption remains a persistent public health concern, yet alcohol products, many of which are visually appealing or flavored, remain widely available within a regulated framework. The existence of underage alcohol misuse has not resulted in prohibitive policies that unduly burden lawful adult consumers or legitimate businesses. A balanced regulatory approach to cannabis should follow the same principle.

Parental responsibility also plays a critical role in preventing accidental ingestion. Just as parents are expected to store alcohol, prescription medications, and other potentially harmful products safely, the responsibility to keep cannabis products out of the reach of children ultimately lies within the home. Imposing excessive restrictions on lawful products in the regulated market does not substitute for responsible storage and supervision.

Importantly, this bill would have significant unintended consequences for medical cannabis patients. Many registered medical cannabis cardholders require higher-dose products to manage chronic pain, stimulate appetite, or address other serious health conditions. Restricting product availability or potency would effectively reduce access to affordable and effective treatment options at a time when healthcare costs continue to rise. For these individuals, cannabis is not a recreational product, it is a medically necessary component of their treatment regimen.

Additionally, over-regulation and excessive taxation have already placed substantial strain on small, locally owned cannabis businesses operating within the legal market. Further restrictions risk driving consumers, both medical and rec use, back to the

unregulated market, where products are not subject to testing, labeling, or safety standards. Such an outcome would undermine public health objectives and reduce tax revenue, while empowering illicit operators.

Sound public policy should balance youth protection, patient access, economic sustainability, and public safety. This bill, as currently structured, risks harming medical patients, disadvantaging compliant small businesses, and strengthening the illicit market, without demonstrably advancing its stated goals.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose or substantially revise this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.