

Submitter: Laura Balestreri MD

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1548

Members of the House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade,

I am a pediatrician who practices at a Federally Qualified Health Center in Southern Oregon, taking care of some of our most vulnerable youth. Many of my patients have family members who have struggled or are currently struggling with substance abuse, and it is common for them to have THC products in the home where children are living. I also care for teens who are at high risk for developing cannabis use disorders. The central issue of this bill is to reduce preventable harm to Oregon children and youth. SB 1548 directly responds to documented increases in pediatric poisonings and the risks associated with high-potency THC products. SB 1548 mirrors the state of Washington's THC edibles product packaging regulations, which have proven to significantly reduce hospitalizations and poisonings among young children. Edible product will be individually wrapped in no more than 10mg portions and contained in child-resistant packaging.

- SB 1548 does not restrict adult access to legal products.
- There is zero evidence that consumers who currently purchase edible products from regulated cannabis shops would switch to purchasing on the illicit market merely because of the existence of a safely packaged serving.
- If there were any unexpected costs associated with individual serving packaging requirements subsequently passed on to consumers, it's unlikely to materially affect demand in our marketplace with the lowest-cost cannabis in the country.
- The key cost question is "What will it cost children, families, and the state if we choose not to act?"

SB 1548 closes a dangerous loophole in high-potency products, is evidence-based, and aligns Oregon with proven safety standards. Our economic future depends on healthy children and families; protecting them is not in conflict with economic development, it is the foundation of it.

Additionally, we know that youth and young adults aged 15-24 years old are at particularly susceptible risk for cannabis use disorder because of their developing brains and the widely available, very potent products. Cannabis Use Disorder puts these young people at risk for lifelong mental illness, including psychosis. While this bill protects toddlers, it's equally focused on our adolescents. Addiction is a pediatric-

onset disease; young people's developing brains are uniquely vulnerable to high-potency THC, alcohol, and nicotine, and we know that THC candy-like edibles are often the entry point for high school-age children.

Our economic future depends on healthy children and families; protecting them is not in conflict with economic development, it is the foundation of it. I urge you to support SB 1548.

Sincerely,

Laura Balestreri, MD

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