
Committee Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY OVERSIGHT, REFORM AND FEDERAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

“The Committee will receive testimony from invited speakers and the public on the impact of prospective marijuana legislation on the public health, criminal justice system, and economy in New Jersey”

LOCATION: Moses Community Center
Bergen Community College
Paramus, New Jersey

DATE: May 12, 2018
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Joe Danielsen, Chair
Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez
Assemblyman Benjie E. Wimberly
Assemblyman Ronald S. Dancer
Assemblyman Brian E. Rumpf



ALSO PRESENT:

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Committee Aide

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Assembly Majority
Committee Aide

Thea M. Sheridan
Assembly Republican
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Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,
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COMMITTEE NOTICE

TO: MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY OVERSIGHT, REFORM AND FEDERAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: ASSEMBLYMAN JOE DANIELSEN, CHAIRMAN

SUBJECT: COMMITTEE MEETING - MAY 12, 2018

The public may address comments and questions to Stephanie M. Wozunk, Committee Aide, or make bill status and scheduling inquiries to Sophie Love, Secretary, at (609)847-3890, fax (609)777-2998, (609)847-3855, fax (609)292-0561 or e-mail: OLSAideAOF@njleg.org. Written and electronic comments, questions and testimony submitted to the committee by the public, as well as recordings and transcripts, if any, of oral testimony, are government records and will be available to the public upon request.

The Assembly Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committee will meet on Saturday, May 12, 2018 at 10:00 AM at Bergen Community College, Moses Conference Center, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus, New Jersey 07652.

The committee will receive testimony from invited speakers and the public on the impact of prospective marijuana legislation on the public health, criminal justice system, and economy in New Jersey.

Issued 5/7/18

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ASSEMBLYMAN JOE DANIELSEN (Chair): Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I'm Chairman Danielsen; welcome to the Oversight Committee meeting, where our intent is to have a discussion on cannabis.

Before I go any further, I'd like to ask everybody to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. (all recite Pledge)

I'd like to thank everybody for coming out today. I'd also like to thank the staff at OLS, the Minority Office and the Majority Office for tolerating these Saturday morning meetings. The good news is, I'm going to have a meeting every Saturday; so adjust your schedule. (laughter)

MS. WOZUNK: (Committee Aide) Have fun. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'll be the only one here.

So again, our purpose is to have an open, unfettered discussion on the subject of cannabis. We want to hear what your thoughts, and concerns, and agenda are, and we're going to try to accommodate everybody the best we can.

We are going to keep to a very strict schedule the best we can, so this doesn't go on for too long. I ask that if you have -- if you feel that, or we feel that you have a lengthy statement to read, that instead of just sitting there reading a statement, hand it to us. The Committee members will get a copy of it and we'll read it offline.

In the interest of time, we just don't think it's productive for you to just sit there reading a statement. We'd rather have an honest, open discussion with you. And here you can have both, within the timeframe we're going to allow you. So if I cut you off or give you a warning, I'm not being rude; I'm just giving you the courtesy, and we have to keep to a

schedule because a lot of people want to be heard. And at these meetings, as it turns out, not everybody gets to be heard.

So hopefully, when we're done today, at our conclusion, everybody's voice was heard by the Committee and our colleagues who aren't here.

So that being said, I'd like to ask for a roll call.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblyman Rumpf.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblyman Dancer.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblyman Wimberly.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman Lopez.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LOPEZ: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Vice Chair Houghtaling.

ASSEMBLYMAN ERIC HOUGHTALING (Vice Chair):

Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Chairman Danielsen.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: We have a quorum.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

The first witness I'd like to call up is Jay Czarkowski, from Canna Advisors.

Jay Czarkowski.

JAY CZARKOWSKI: (off mike) You guys put me right on the spot, first thing; thanks a lot. (laughter)

Should I sit here?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes.

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Well, good morning, everybody, and thank you for having me.

I'm from Boulder, Colorado; I've been in the cannabis industry in Colorado for nine years. And as we like to say in Colorado, being in the industry for that long -- it's kind of like dog years, so it seems like an entire lifetime.

Again, my name is Jay Czarkowski; I got involved in the cannabis industry back in 2009 in Colorado before regulation, before licensing. It was the Wild West back then; so we really were in a position where we had to figure this out, and we had to-- The saying back then was, working in the cannabis industry was kind of like flying an airplane while you were building that airplane.

That even holds true today. We feel it's our responsibility to do our part to continue to build a responsible industry, while we're working and hopefully thriving within the industry.

So a couple of things. I'm a serial entrepreneur in the space. My primary business is a consulting and services company, called *Canna Advisors*. Most of the work that we do is help develop programs in new states; and then we work with entrepreneurs in those new states to help them build their teams, work with local communities to get local support, work on their application, and hopefully win licenses and start up responsible, compliant businesses within the space.

We're also investors in the space. We do our best to do our part to support startups in new places, invest in those businesses, and help

build businesses in new places. And then, most importantly, I'll say this -- so we're also advocates. We learned, early on, the benefits of cannabis, not just for medical, for medical purposes, in which there are certainly many; and I will admit I was skeptical at first, nine years ago when I got involved. But after we opened our first dispensary and began to serve patients, I saw with my own eyes how wonderful cannabis could be, especially when it's helping people get off of more harmful pharmaceutical medications.

We've seen how it helps people with PTSD, with pain, high blood pressure, Crohn's -- so many things.

And that's what brings me here today, with my advocacy hat on. I've done business, now, and helped build programs in a total of 25 states; New Jersey will be number 26. And I'm excited to be here.

I could say-- And how much time should I take; another couple of few minutes? I don't want to go over.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You have three minutes left.

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Perfect.

I could share a little bit about what I've seen with my own eyes as a parent, as a husband, as a family guy, a member of my community in Boulder, Colorado.

You know, at first, nine years ago, a lot of folks were very nervous about, "What is this going to mean for our community?" And when it kind of blew up untethered, with no regulation and no licensing-- You know, we're a city of 100,000 people; and I think 200 businesses opened up, which was certainly too many. But over time, the less professional businesses -- they went away, they went out of business. The city reined it all in.

And what we have today is a responsible program in Boulder, Colorado. We have approximately 30 dispensaries. And at this point in time, it's just very mainstream.

The thing that really caught my attention last summer was there was -- the city put on an event; it was teaching kids how to ride any type of a device with wheels -- scooters, tricycles, bicycles. Now, north of the city they set up the part of this event for the youngest kids to learn how to ride tricycles right in front of one of the dispensaries. And it didn't bother anybody; and that's what really drove the point home to me that, you know, finally this is accepted and it's mainstream.

A couple of stats in Colorado. After a number of years of this being not only legal for medical, but now legal for adult-use, teen use of cannabis is down. Shocking, but it's down; I think, because it's more mainstream, maybe there's no more allure. Drunk driving is certainly down in Colorado, because a lot of adults have chosen the safer alternative of using cannabis more than using alcohol. And alcohol consumption is down 13 percent; the beer companies are certainly not happy about that, but that's a proven stat.

And a really interesting stat is -- this just came out recently -- Medicare and Medicaid insurance costs are down in Colorado. The only reason that I can think of is that more people are choosing to use the less-toxic cannabis to treat their ills, and not so much on the pharmaceutical side.

So that's what I've seen. And I have three kids; they've all gone through high school and they didn't turn into stoners, they didn't abuse

cannabis. And that's what I've seen, that's what I've witnessed, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. Czarkowski, you said how many businesses in Boulder opened up?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Initially, before regs and licensing, there were 200, between dispensaries, cultivation facilities, and processing facilities.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And how many are there now?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: There's probably closer to 40 to 50, all in; but there are only 25 or so dispensaries at this point, which is still a lot, I guess, for a city of 100,000 people.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So when I went to Colorado, I surveyed and interviewed a lot of people -- not in Boulder -- but one message I heard is, the first 8 to 10 months, they ran into problems. People weren't used to using it; the administration was new, and so forth. So there were incidents, you know, with police, and paramedics, and so forth. Did you experience that in Boulder?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I saw a little bit of that -- of people, especially, coming in from out of town who maybe did not have a lot of experience with cannabis.

It's hard to use too much smoking it; but certainly with an edible, perhaps, it is possible for people to take a little more than is within their comfort zone initially. And the way that we overcame that was by very strict, and detailed, and obvious labeling; along with a public relations campaign to teach people -- we called it the *First Time 5* campaign, that

means, if it's your first time trying an edible, stick to no more than 5 milligrams.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Since you've come all the way from Colorado here, what's your advice to New Jersey?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Well, my advice to the State of New Jersey industry -- I was thinking about this last night -- you know, patient safety, consumer safety. I think the most important thing that we can do here is make sure -- whether it's for adult-use, whether it's for medical use -- let's make sure, that the people of New Jersey are getting a clean product; they're getting a contaminant-free product. There are a number of ways that can be accomplished. I don't believe that the State needs to go overboard with testing; but I think it needs to be put on these businesses that are allowed to cultivate to certainly be responsible for testing their product and ensuring, through a professional lab -- whether that's an in-house lab or a third-party lab -- that the people of New Jersey are getting a clean product, a contaminant-free product.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Member Wimberly.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Thank you, Chairman.

Good morning.

You talked about, you know, I mean, I guess the pros of it. Now, in our area, which I'm concerned about, is the black market of marijuana. What impact did it have on the black market in Colorado?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: So the black market, to some degree, especially early on, has been just decimated by legalization. You know, I've often thought about what's the value of the black market here in New Jersey; I mean, is it a billion dollars; is it half a billion? It's big, right?

And I don't know what the cost of the black market is here; but I remember back when we started in Colorado, a pound of cannabis sold for \$3,600, right? So it was really easy for somebody in the black market to have a pound of cannabis and make big money.

You know, today, wholesale in Colorado is in the \$800 to \$1,000 a pound range. So it's really tough if you are a black market grower, and you have a couple of dozen plants at your house, it's kind of hard to make money at \$1,000 a pound, versus \$3,600 a pound.

So ideally, legalization puts enough downward pricing pressure on the black market that it simply-- I don't think it will ever go away completely.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Outside of the pricing, one of my concerns, I guess -- I hear from constituents and parents is -- in our area we have, I guess, people not only already selling the marijuana, they're selling bad marijuana. So be it synthetic, be it laced with, believe it or not, embalming fluid, fentanyl, whatever it may be. Has that -- have you had any of these overdoses or cases where people had medical emergencies? Or has that been on the decline also?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: So the good news is, when it comes to actual marijuana, it's impossible to overdose. And I could talk more about that if you like.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: I'm talking about the mental impact. So if you smoke marijuana laced with embalming fluid, there's a very good chance that it's going to have a medical impact on you. You're not going to overdose; but you're going to have some mental, you know problems, or whatever it may be. I know we had cases where kids were smoking synthetic marijuana -- or whatever it's called, you know. So I just wanted to know -- has any of that decreased, or has that been visible in Colorado?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: So the whole synthetics-- When people call this stuff-- And I know what you're speaking of; I've heard what they call it, they call it, like, *Spice* and different names.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Yes, yes.

MR. CZARKOWSKI: And it always befuddles me why people call that *synthetic marijuana*, because there's no relation between whatever garbage that is and actual marijuana, right? You know, in that situation, people are taking I don't know--

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: I guess my point is, has that-- Has that -- the legalization, has it decreased the fake -- whatever it's called; whatever you want to call it?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: So I don't follow that that closely. I could tell you this -- that as a parent, I have not heard anything in the news in Colorado -- and I know this has happened in other states; I've heard about it -- but in Colorado, no, I never hear any news stories about kids smoking whatever poison that is.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: And that's just what it is; it's poison. So that's my concern, you know -- I guess, constituents have, is

that, you know, they talk about decriminalizing, which is-- But if there's still a black market, then what are we -- we're saying, what are we decriminalizing?

So I understand; believe me, I'm on your side with the legalization point of it. But I just want to know, you know, statistics with the Colorados, with the Nevadas, or the Californias -- how has it really impacted the black market.

So you answered the question when it comes to finance, and that.

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Yes; there is a black market that still exists, certainly, I would think; to some degree, there always will be. But it's been greatly, greatly, greatly reduced in Colorado.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: And that's what I wanted to hear.

Thank you very much.

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. Czarkowski, just for disclosure, you are an advocate for this, and you're so compensated?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I am here at my own expense; nobody is paying me to be here today.

Like I said, I kind of wore three hats as an entrepreneur, an investor, and as an advocate. And I am here as an advocate to help the folks of New Jersey hopefully build a responsible program and provide access to not only sick people, but to give the adults in New Jersey a safer alternative to alcohol.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I just have one question.

It just came out recently about California legalization of marijuana, and their projection for revenue for that. And, you know, how they're nowhere close of their expected revenue, because they still have a very predominant black market.

Do you have any thoughts on that?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I sure do.

So California has always fascinated me. It has been the Wild, Wild West out there, not just for a year or two, but for an entire generation, an entire lifetime for some people.

They have had a thriving black market for decades and decades; and some say that even before legalization, California has already been exporting -- you know, illegally, of course -- you want to talk about a robust black market, exporting as much as 80 percent of what they produce in the state. So it's a whole different ballgame out there.

And you know, certainly, as more states legalize it and more states have programs, the appetite for that black market cannabis from California -- it goes down every year, to the point where I'm hearing now -- you want to talk about downward pressure -- there are some large cultivation operations that are selling cannabis for \$100 a pound wholesale. It's tough to stay in business there.

I don't do business in California, because it has always been -- I hate to use the word-- I won't use the word I usually use, but yes, it's just the Wild West out there. It's going to take an entire lifetime, I believe, just to unwind what's going on in California. I don't see anything like that even remotely ever taking place here anywhere on the East Coast.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you, Chairman,

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. Czarkowski, do you have an opinion on licensing -- on how Colorado did it, did it well, or did it poorly? Any opinion on how New Jersey should administer its licensing and make it accessible to women, and minorities, and veterans?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Absolutely.

One thing that I've learned over 26 states is when the number of licenses is severely limited -- like they have been in New Jersey, like they are in New York -- a program never really takes hold, right? People never really take it seriously. And because of the limited licenses, product quality is not as good as it should be, and certainly pricing stays high, right?

So I'm a big believer in as open a market as can be established; I'm a big believer in the industry being inclusive; and I'm a big believer -- let the best people of New Jersey -- the smartest, the brightest, the most passionate -- let the best people have an opportunity to get a license, develop the best products, and give everybody a chance to participate and succeed.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Have you looked at any of the proposed bills in New Jersey -- on how they were approached, relative to the licensing?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I have.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And what is your opinion on that?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Well, my opinion -- certainly, the current program, which allows for a minimum of six licenses, you know, certainly it sounds like that could be expanded. You know, my personal

opinion on what would be a logical expansion of medical -- let's open it up to-- Well, first of all, I'm a believer of horizontal integration, not vertical. I don't think it's right to force any group to be an expert at cultivation, an expert at processing and manufacture of products, as well as patient-facing retail. So I definitely believe the licenses should be split up.

But I would love to see another few dozen cultivation licenses; really open it up. I'd love to see at least that many more processing and manufacturing facilities. And with a state of nine million people, I would think that the State of New Jersey could easily accommodate hundreds of dispensary licenses.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What about cultivating licenses?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: Well, you know, again, the more cultivation licenses you issue, the more reasonable that bio mass will be priced on the wholesale market.

And the thing about cultivation-- These cultivators aren't just cultivating the buds for any kind of a smokeable product. You know, these cultivators need to produce enough of this plant material to provide the processors enough plant material to make the oil. And it's really these oils and these isolates of CBD, and THC, and all of the other compounds -- it's really these isolates that then go into manufacturing the best medical products, whether that be an edible, a tincture, an oil, a spray.

So the more cultivation, really, the better. I don't know what that number is; maybe it's dozens of licenses, maybe it's a certain millions of square feet of canopy. But I can tell you that the more cultivation, the better it is for the State program.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You also feel, as I've stated on the record, that the processor laboratory licenses should be separated; separating the growing from the science?

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I believe that the licenses should be separate, yes. Because I might be the best cultivator in the world; I might have a farming background, and all I want to do is grow a whole bunch of plants. And you might be a guy with a biosciences background, coming from pharma, and you're certainly going to make a better formulated product than I can.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Any other questions? (no response)

Mr. Czarkowski, thank you very much for taking such a long trip to New Jersey to benefit my community. (applause)

MR. CZARKOWSKI: I'm happy to be here; thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: The next witness I would like to call up -- and excuse me if I pronounce this incorrectly -- Arnaud Dumas de Raully, from Blinc Group.

ARNAUD DUMAS de RAULY: Hello.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: How did I do on the name?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Arnaud Dumas de Raully. (spoken with a French accent) (laughter)

(spoken with American accent) It was good.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: That's what I said. (laughter)
Everybody heard it; everybody heard it.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Yes; I'm sorry, I'm half French.

Thank you very much for having me here today.

I am currently with the NJCIA. I'm here as an advocate and as a businessperson; as Co-CEO in charge of the strategy of the Blinc Group, an incubator for consumption technologies, based in Manhattan; and also as Chairman of the ISO, International Standards Organization Committee on Vapor Products.

In terms of the access to these products -- I played semi-pro rugby for 12 years in Paris; and have had up to 147 fractures in the skull. These have been very, very, very painful. I was introduced to CBD and THC therapy in France, where it's banned; and it worked perfect wonders. I'm now able to stay concentrated, where I wasn't able to stay concentrated beforehand.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. de Rauly, I have to ask you -- after the first, like, say 30 fractures-- (laughter)

Continue on, continue on.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: You don't know rugby players.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'm off subject; I'm out of order.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Yes; it hurts.

I'm sorry; we don't have helmets on, here, when we play.

But I'm here basically to talk about the product safety. And Jay introduced this very, very well earlier. There are products out there, on the black market currently, that are not good; we spoke about these earlier. There are product standards that do exist; I am living proof, Chairman of the Internal Standards Committee, on these vapor products. These standards, right now, are, for instance, for protocols. Because right now,

when you ask two labs to test something, they don't have a common protocol, so both labs are going to find different results. That is the reason why these standards exist and are implemented.

So in terms of products, and everything that is being used, and all the regulations being implemented, these standards are here to help. They are here to provide safety; they are here to provide product consistency. The only way you can reach consistency is by controlling what is going out there.

Today, we have products that, for instance -- this is a very specific example -- use cotton wicks. A cotton wick for cannabis oil doesn't have the capillarity that is able to handle the viscosity of cannabis oil. Meaning by that, when you take -- I'm going to give you -- show you a live example; I'm not going to use it, don't worry -- there's a cotton wick in here (indicates). The cannabis oil is going to be perfect on the first inhalation. Second time you puff, you take a dry hit. That brings out aldehydes that are carcinogenic substances, because you are burning the cotton coil. This, up until two years ago, was 75 percent of the vape pens. Today, we managed to bring that down. It's all about the technology you're using.

Now, you can always say, well, in New Jersey, right now, we don't allow for oil. But how do you treat people who have asthma, who have respiratory diseases who need the product and for which you're going to be harming them when they use legalized weed? There are vape pens; there are perfect products out there that can be used. But again, how do you measure these? You use product standards.

I've been involved in the vaping industry for the past 10 years; I have testified at the European Commission, at the FDA; and the main

subject that comes up is, what are the long-term effects of using these products.

But one of the main subjects is, it's 95 percent safer than the combustion itself that you get from smoking the products.

This is one of the reasons why I urge New Jersey to consider cannabis oil instead of using only weed. There are some people who will be better suited to weed, some people better suited to oil, but some better suited to edibles.

Once again, I'm sorry to bring this back over -- product standards. Everyone thinks there are no standards out there; there are. I'm trying to herd 126 countries to agreeing to these same standards, and these standards represent mostly testing protocols.

Thank you very much. I'm available to answer any questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. de Rauly, thank you very much for your testimony.

You touched on one of the two areas that I'm most concerned with, and science is one of those two.

And I appreciate your experience, because the science -- in the end, it's all about the science. And what you're talking about is an analytical chemistry laboratory, a chromatography laboratory that does extractions, and separations, and isolations. And I think what your message here is -- you shouldn't leave that to a master grower; it should be left to a scientist. And it's not just the extraction, but it's also the delivery vehicle, the delivery paraphernalia, the filters, the porosity. Is it hydrophobic or hydrophilic; is it cotton, or polytetrafluoroethylene, or polyvinylidene fluoride filter?

And it all comes down to the product -- consumer safety, because this is a pharmaceutical to be ingested in one's body.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Exactly. And what a lot of people don't understand, with regards to the product, is it's something you're putting in your lungs. So let's make sure that what you're putting in your lungs is the best possible quality. The only way to do that is -- for a regulation; and a sensible regulation that allows these businesses to provide these products.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Lungs -- assuming you're inhaling it. But it could be a drop, that would go into your esophagus, and your stomach, and kidneys, and liver.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Exactly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: But you didn't mention an equally important product -- edibles. You know, you're comparing vaping versus smoking; but there are also drops, and dermal patches, and brownies, and cookies. There are many delivery vehicles. Do you have an opinion on the others?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: There are a lot of different vehicles, and it all comes down to bioavailability. Bioavailability is the amount of any substance -- you can even use sugar -- that goes into your bloodstream, and the rate at which it goes into your bloodstream. For some people, bioavailability, using edibles, is a lot slower. I'll give you a personal example. If I smoke weed, or if I vape it, I go to sleep right afterwards. If I use an edible, it takes longer to get into the system, and I feel good. It's a great product; it's a great way to do things.

There are a lot of consumption -- different consumption means that have to be used, and that have to be understood, and have to be communicated. The education is a huge component of this. And I believe in this industry, and especially here in the New York-New Jersey area -- there are more scientific specialists than there are out west who really understand all of this.

I mean, in New Jersey-- Where are all the biggest scientists? They're in New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: The Committee you sit on with ISO -- is that Committee just focusing on the vape products?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: It's only vapor products; exactly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And so they have a standard, or an opinion, or a protocol, a recommendation?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: There are protocols. The first two are under public comment, and will be published in a couple of weeks. We have the annual ISO meeting in three weeks.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Is there a draft that the Committee can look at?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Yes, I can send you the links, definitely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Is ISO doing anything for edibles?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: No, nothing on edibles for now. This is really the vaping area.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Do you also agree that the licensing should be separate?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Well, you touched on it when you said some aspects of the business, like extraction, should be done by scientists, and not salespeople or not retailers. That is precisely the point.

You know, when you're an entrepreneur, you surround yourself by people who know things that you don't know. It's sort of the same situation. You have growers, extractors, retailers, distributor -- the different licenses also provide for a better breach and a better supply chain. Right now, in New Jersey -- and I've heard these stories from people in this state -- sometimes they don't have enough product, and they can't sell because they're not allowed to buy it from someone else. So you're hurting business, you're hurting jobs, and, ultimately, you're hurting the economy by not having separate licenses.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

Any questions from the Committee?

Member Wimberly.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Thank you, Chairman.

The rugby part (laughter) -- I mean, I--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: One hundred fifty fractures.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: How many times (indiscernible)? I'm still baffled by that, but I admire you.

Have any of the, I guess, professional sports unions officially endorsed marijuana legalization? Because I know there are many--And we met John Donegan's wife out in Vegas; and I know the impact with the pain relief that these guys, using marijuana instead of, you know, any type of OxyContin or any of those types of things like that-- Has there been any official endorsement from any of the unions -- players unions?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: There are unofficial -- there are a lot of unofficial endorsements. There are some official endorsements; but when you see the lash back that these endorsements get from the media, it scares people -- it scares people.

We have documented cases; and we have a lot former NFL players, former basketball players, who are in the industry to advocate for this.

This is a life-changing plant that can help people. It has helped me.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: You don't have to convince me; I'm not saying you're insincere.

And I know, talking to some of them -- and particularly, to get it off the banned substance list would make a major impact on, you know, the pain management that they have to go through. I mean, like you said, you did it without a helmet; these guys are doing it with helmets, and basketball, and their bodies are taking a major beating. And instead of them getting caught on, you know, the opioids and those types of pain relievers, this, to me, makes sense.

So it's just a comment.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: It does make sense; and I can tell you right now, in France, as an example, the CBD products are gaining a lot of popularity within the French Federation of Rugby. There are actually ordinances that are coming out from the French Federation.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: To vote to come off the banned substance list?

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: The CBD part, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Or you could just buy helmets. (laughter)

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Yes; I think my mom would love that -- would have loved that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any other questions? (no response)

No other questions? (no response)

Sir, thank you very much for coming out.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And make sure OLS has your contact information. I'm sure people would like to continue speaking with you.

MR. DUMAS de RAULY: Perfect; thank you very much. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay, the next witness I'd like to call up -- Patrick Witcher.

P A T R I C K W I T C H E R: Good morning, Chairman, and the rest of the council.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Good morning.

MR. WITCHER: Thank you for having me this morning.

I'm here on behalf of the NJCIA: I'm one of the Board members; and I think a question came earlier -- I have not been compensated to be here.

I am also currently the Vice President of Strategic Affairs for a company called *GrowForce* in Canada. Prior to that, I was the President of Buddy Boy Brands, which is a dispensary company in Denver, Colorado.

And then I'm probably going to shock you with my background prior to that -- and I'm sure that's the reason I'm here today, is some of the education and some of the regulatory things that I would encourage you guys to do -- prior to that I was in law enforcement; I was a sergeant with Kansas City Police Department. I spent several years there, and I was also an agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration in Las Vegas.

In 2014, I was asked to -- or 2013, I was asked to come to Denver and look at that industry, from a good friend. And I went there, in 2013, very skeptical, to be honest with you. I wasn't quite sure that that was going to be a decision that I would make.

And I spent some time there, and made the decision to run the compliance and regulatory side for the company. And then, in 2014, I was appointed President of the company.

So I had a lot of experience, over the last four years, through the cultivation stuff. And one of the other things that I do is a lot of training with -- do presentations with law enforcement groups, and really and truly encourage a lot of the legislation.

I encourage a lot of the safety issues, and I work-- I guess the point that I would make to you today is to make sure that you are very cognizant of working with the industry. I don't ever try to change anybody's mind, one way or the other; I just try to tell people if you're going to do it, here are some of the good things, here are some of the bad things; and I would encourage you to be very cognizant of that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

Do you have any other recommendations for implementation, licensing, enforcement, supervision?

MR. WITCHER: You know, I would encourage law enforcement to take a very active role. I know that's been a very tough thing here in the United States, because it's still under Schedule I. And I think that's the unfortunate part. I think there are so many studies out there now that are showing that it needs to come off of Schedule I, one way or the other. Trying to enforce by memorandum and do things, I think is unfair to the law enforcement side as well.

As far as the legislative here -- you know, I think you need to be very careful, and listen to some of the industry experts. I'm only on one committee, I mean one Board; and that's this one, and I'm very particular about that. Because I just don't -- I want to make sure that they're looking at it from the regulatory side, and looking at it from being -- a very safe and cautious approach.

So I would encourage you to be careful on some of the home grow issues. That becomes a major problem, at times, with people renting or buying houses and putting things in there. So I would be very careful about those things, making sure that you're watching those.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: One, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: You mentioned a downside. I mean, what would you say would be -- caution New Jersey on the downside of legalized marijuana?

MR. WITCHER: The downside -- some of the home grow issues -- to make sure that you're watching those very carefully to make sure that that-- If you're going to have those here in New Jersey, that you have some type of regulation, or someone who could check on those types of things to be careful about that.

It's been a very -- in my experience, some of things that Jay said earlier. On the very positive side, it has-- I think people thought there was going to be Armageddon in Denver; and I just haven't seen that. In my opinion, I just have not seen that. And I definitely changed my mind, over the last four years, in a very positive -- some of the impacts that it's made and some of the things that it's really helped.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: As a law enforcement officer, did you ever feel that you actually had an impact on stopping cannabis -- cannabis products getting in and being on the street? (laughter)

MR. WITCHER: Absolutely not.

You know, I've heard people say before -- and I was glad to hear Jay and everyone else say that there's always going to be a black market. There is going to be one. I think that you -- I think cannabis has been here forever; and one way or the other, I think it's always going to be here. So I think doing it responsibly, and coming out, and figuring out ways to do that--

You know, some of the things that came up earlier -- about the Spice and some of those other issues -- I think that's a great point, that that

is out there. And I think if you give an option to go to a licensed, legal dispensary and purchase that, where it's not a crazy, outrageous price, but you can purchase that where you know it's been tested for pesticides, you test it for the microbials and it's very safe -- I think that takes some of that option away, or some of the desire to do that away.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

Any other questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Thank you.

Your comment about home grow raises a concern. Do you see home grow as leading to more of a proliferation of the black market?

MR. WITCHER: If not regulated, sir, I think it could. I think you just have to-- If you're going to allow that, you need to set things in place to make sure that there are ways to regulate that; or checks and balances on that to ensure that there are not people trying to do that to get it to the black market.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: In your view, what would be the ideal regulation, should home grow be permitted?

MR. WITCHER: I would say that, in my opinion, that you would have to have some type -- it would have to be registered, that you knew the address or knew where that was going to happen. In my opinion, that would be the smart way to do that.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Random checks?

MR. WITCHER: Random checks.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you very much for your appearance and testimony today, sir.

MR. WITCHER: Thank you, sir. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: The next witness we're calling up -- Cristina Buccola.

C R I S T I N A B U C C O L A, Esq.: Close; it's okay, I answer to all of them.

Thank you for having me here this morning.

My name is Cristina Buccola, and I'm an attorney who's licensed in New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Massachusetts, and Illinois.

I'm sitting here before you today because, in 2013, I started to look at medical cannabis as a modality to treat my father's Parkinson's disease. And then that lead me on a very interesting path, with stops off as the General Counsel of *High Times*; and also becoming a partner in a large recreational cultivation operation out in the Pacific Northwest.

I now run my own boutique practice that's focused on cannabis -- law practice, that is, that's focused on cannabis; and about half of my practice is dedicated to advocacy measures. Through those advocacy measures I'm lucky enough to work with the NJCIA, and I really support the work that they do towards implementing a regulated and sensible adult-use cannabis program in New Jersey.

So I know that this Committee, over the last months, has been presented with ample information about all of the taxation revenue that's going to be generated by an adult-use program. And certainly that's going to have an economic boon for the State.

But I'd also like the Committee to consider an additional area of economic importance as it considers its program; and that comes in the

form of decriminalization for cannabis offenses -- for certain nonviolent cannabis offenses, and then the subsequent expungement of those records.

So New Jersey has long recognized that it's important that people with criminal backgrounds, when they're released from prison, are gainfully employed, because this also helps reduce recidivism. And to that end it introduced *ban the box* legislation in 2014, which prevents New Jersey employers, before an initial interview, from asking about criminal backgrounds.

Now, when a criminal background is run subsequent to that initial interview, if a record is not expunged, it's going to come up on that background check. So here what's going to happen. We've had-- We're developing a State-sanctioned cannabis program, but people are still going to get caught up, even though their actions now are no longer considered criminal.

So to that end, I would encourage this Committee, and other members of the Legislature, to really be sure that these decriminalization and expungement measures are put into any kind of adult-use legislation.

I'm happy to answer any questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Sure.

With regard to the issue of expungement, what would be your opinion on how far back New Jersey should look?

MS. BUCCOLA: Do you mean timing, or as far as the actual offense committed? I mean, I think that the offenses for which it needs to

be expunged are -- I'm not even saying *low-level*; but *nonviolent* -- those that are nonviolent.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Just to -- as an example, if an individual was convicted, sentenced in municipal court five years ago, continues to have that record -- in your opinion, should that record be expunged?

MS. BUCCOLA: Absolutely, absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: So how many years back should we be looking?

MS. BUCCOLA: As many years back as it takes, right?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Right.

MS. BUCCOLA: Because these people -- you're allowing certain actors now to go about the very same business that put people behind bars; and we're preventing them from coming out and having gainful employment, because they get trapped in the system where this is appearing on their records and it's no longer a criminal activity.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Would you suggest that the expungement be limited only to possession offenses, as opposed to distribution?

MS. BUCCOLA: No, I think if -- it should also go to distribution. Again, here, the critical point I make is, that it's a nonviolent offense.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Limited to marijuana, however.

MS. BUCCOLA: Cannabis; yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Okay.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You said you were an advocate.

MS. BUCCOLA: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Are there specific areas that you are focused on in your advocacy?

MS. BUCCOLA: Yes; sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Do you want to speak to that?

MS. BUCCOLA: I'm definitely pro expansion of medical, in no small part because of my dad.

I also am very concerned about economic justice and social justice in the development of adult-use cannabis legalization legislation. You asked about licensing before -- I'm also against vertical integration, but I also think microlicensing needs to happen in every state.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Microlicensing?

MS. BUCCOLA: Microlicensing.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: For the benefit of everybody in the room--

MS. BUCCOLA: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --I know what you mean.

MS. BUCCOLA: Right--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --but why don't you tell us what you mean.

MS. BUCCOLA: *Microlicensing* -- sure -- microlicensing -is similar to microbreweries, in that smaller cultivation, and retail outlets, and

processors are able to operate and compete with the larger players; because we all know that there will be larger players. We see that in every state.

They are also able to pool their assets and resources and compete with those larger players, too.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Have you taken a look at how New Jersey -- some of its bills are approaching the licensing?

MS. BUCCOLA: I don't think there are enough levels of licensing, from what I've seen.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Well, see, you also support separating the licenses.

MS. BUCCOLA: I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What about how -- what is your opinion on how New Jersey should approach the inclusion of women, minorities, veterans, disabled veterans?

MS. BUCCOLA: Sure.

What's interesting is that we can look to other states to see how they're rolling out these programs. I think that Massachusetts is kind of a shining example here. And I do practice on the West Coast, in Oregon; and places like Oregon and Colorado -- I don't think that they did it right, but they also do not have the diversity that we have here on the East Coast. So when you're talking about populations that are 89, 90 percent white, you don't have to make certain a lot -- or, it's less imperative to make certain allotments for licenses for women and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Just a clarification.

MS. BUCCOLA: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: I understand about your advocacy for the legalization and medical purposes. What about recreational?

MS. BUCCOLA: Oh, no -- for adult-use, absolutely. I think that it needs to be decriminalized; I think that it needs -- records need to be expunged, and there needs to be an adult-use legal program; pro.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Right; okay.

And then with respect to detecting impairment, determining impairment, driving under the influence--

MS. BUCCOLA: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: --just your thoughts on that.

MS. BUCCOLA: Field sobriety tests are going to be the best way to go about that. Because as you know, the metabolites -- once you consume cannabis, metabolites are left in an individual's system for up to a month. So I could have smoked a joint two days ago, and I get pulled over, and it's still going to register me as being under the influence, although I'm not.

Again, field sobriety tests are probably the best way to go about this, and training officers to look for impairment when they pull people over.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Seeing no other questions, I'd like to thank you for your appearance and testimony today.

MS. BUCCOLA: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Devra Karlebach.

D E V R A K A R L E B A C H: I'd just like to congratulate you on being the first person to ever say my name correctly; thank you very much. (laughter)

Thank you very much for having me here this morning.

I am also a member of NJCIA -- a Committee member on the Rules and Policy Committee; as well as CEO of GTI New Jersey. GTI is a multi-state license holder with operations in many East Coast states, with a reputation for excellence, compliance, and philanthropy.

One of the reasons that I-- Excuse me; I'm a former -- the former COO and Chief Compliance Officer of Nectar Holdings, which is the market share leader in Oregon, with 12 retail facilities, 6 cultivation facilities, and 2 distribution facilities.

One of the reasons I'm here is, I want to talk to you today about compliance regulations and the rules. One of the things that I think maybe you haven't heard -- a perspective you haven't heard is, when talking about adult-use and even enhanced medical, and coming out with new regulations and rules regarding that-- A staffer asked me to speak today on my perspective that whatever you put in the rules through regulations of operations, any good operator is going to exceed those rules and regulations because it's good business sense.

We want tight inventory controls, tight processes, and tight procedures; not because of what the State says we need to do, but because it just makes good business sense. We also understand the responsibility of

bringing legal, compliant cannabis to the East Coast and, specifically, to New Jersey -- which is right next to New York, and is a bellwether of the East Coast. We want that opportunity to do legal, compliant cannabis properly.

So whatever regulations you come out with, we internally would most likely double or exceed.

In regards to some questions that you had, that I would like to follow up on, in terms of California, and why California has fallen short of its tax goals. California has a 45 percent tax rate. The reason that they are falling short of their tax goals is, if you can buy black market cannabis or you can pay 45 cents on every dollar that you're paying for cannabis, you are still going to go to the black market. They've made the tax rate exceedingly high, which is why their program is failing. California is not a model to model anything after.

And I'm happy to answer any other questions that you may have.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What is your opinion on how New Jersey should tax?

MS. KARLEBACH: So anything 25 percent and below you help to diminish the black market. Once you go above 25 percent, you tend to encourage black market behavior again.

Now, how does that tax money get split up, versus State, versus local towns that allow dispensaries, or cultivation facilities, or processing facilities in their town? You don't want a Massachusetts model, with host city agreements that can go as high as 10 percent. It's a vague -- it's a-- You have a lot of backwater politics; you really want to avoid that. What

you want to do, in my estimation, is tell the cities that allow those facilities in there, “You’re going to get a local tax rate of likely 3 percent for allowing -- if you opt in, allowing that facility to be there.” You do not want the cities making their own host agreements with the entities, because that’s when you start to get into politics, and that’s when you start to get into shady deals, and that’s when you start to get into bribes. And Massachusetts is a shining example of that -- where the state had to override the host city agreements and put a cap on it of 3 percent.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You said you were a COO; let me ask you your opinion -- we brought it up before -- regarding separating the licenses.

MS. KARLEBACH: So I think that you can -- I think separation of licenses is good, as long as those teams with experts in cultivation, in processing, in retail, are allowed to hold vertically integrated licenses or apply for endorsements if they choose. Some teams are well-built, well-established, and have track record of excellence in each of those areas. I think it helps the market to have some vertically integrated and some horizontal-only license holders; it makes for a more dynamic market.

I don’t think that you should be exclusively one way or exclusively another way.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Interesting.

MS. KARLEBACH: I do think that it comes down to picking the right operators in anything -- whether it be medical or recreational; and you want people with a track record of excellence and compliance. So as much as the previous speaker may disagree with me, I think people who have shown a willingness to break the law, and then are applying for

licenses-- You know, people chose not to break the law; people chose to break the law. I don't think people who have been arrested for distribution should be allowed to apply for licenses.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: In part, I agree with that last part that you mentioned -- about experience and quality teams. But then there's-- Then how do we integrate people here in New Jersey -- women, minorities, veterans -- but they have no experience?

MS. KARLEBACH: They don't necessarily have to have the experience themselves, as long as the team that they are applying with has some experience. I think it's very important to have experience; this is a highly regulated, highly complex business and industry that gets more and more complex by the day.

I think you need to have some people on your team -- you don't have to be the person, but you should surround yourself with a cultivator, or a processor, or a retail person. You're not saying that every person on the team has to have that experience, but teams applying should have some experience in those areas.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: That's reasonable.

MS. KARLEBACH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Yes, just to clarify -- I believe you said that if an individual has been convicted as being a distributor, you didn't think that they should get licensed, if I understood you correctly.

But my point is, is that if there were to be legalization and expungement, obviously those who are convicted distributors -- you couldn't go back, obviously; it's expunged. How do we police that?

MS. KARLEBACH: I think that's a question for a person much more educated than myself. So I'm going to defer on that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Okay; all right.

MS. KARLEBACH: I could just say there are a lot of people who have never broken the law before, and I still think it's a question between right and wrong.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Anybody? (no response)

Ma'am I would like to thank you--

MS. KARLEBACH: I did want to add one demographic, or one statistic--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sure.

MS. KARLEBACH: --about economic opportunities. And I'm not sure if you're aware, but the Marijuana Project did some studies for people who are concerned -- "Not in my backward." "I'm okay with cannabis, as long as the dispensary is not in my hometown, or there's no cultivation facility." And I don't think people truly understand the economic benefits that go into those communities that -- taking out the local tax rates that are invested in those local communities. For every dollar spent implementing a dispensary in a local community, an additional \$2.13 gets generated in that local community. And for every cultivation facility that is -- a dollar spent putting up a local cultivation facility, \$2.40 goes

back into that local economy, not including the money -- the dollars spent on the cultivation, not including the tax that will be generated.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MS. KARLEBACH: You're welcome.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you for your appearance and your testimony.

MS. KARLEBACH: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up JT Singh, Manny Singh Consultants and Attorneys-at-Law.

ਸਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ (Sat sri akaal).

J B SINGH, Esq.: ਸਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ (Sat sri akaal).

Good morning; my name is JT Singh. I primarily reside in midtown Manhattan.

Professionally, I am an attorney, licensed to practice in New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Colorado. Previously I did a lot of trial work; a lot of Federal trial work. Unfortunately, I have, sort of, taken a step back from practicing law, and got into the cannabis space approximately six years ago.

My introduction to the cannabis space -- and I am primarily a corporate attorney, or consultant in the cannabis space -- was on the corporate side, where I did take one of the first American-based cannabis companies public back in 2012. This was a Colorado-based grow; one of the first of its kind. Now there are thousands of public companies out there.

Since then I've been a part of over 50 or so organizations across the country, in about 13 different states, dealing with cannabis. Currently,

though, I've sort of hung up my turban with regards to being an executive for hire (laughter), and sort of put my money where my mouth is; and I am currently the CEO of Caesar Brutus, which maintains nine licenses in California under the new Prop 64 law, and also a large cultivation facility in Las Vegas. And we also have a large distribution network, both in California and in Nevada, for THC vape pens.

And a couple of things I want to mention, especially to this Committee -- and I did practice here in Bergen County quite a bit, so I'm very -- I know the laws here in New Jersey pretty intimately. But I was on the civil and corporate side, not so much criminal.

Some of the things I do want to mention are, especially, the impact on public health -- you know, safe access to cannabis. And a lot of the other speakers before me had mentioned this as well -- but *safe access* meaning contaminant-free, a cannabis that does not have microbials that could be harmful to anybody. It's important; because right now, when you go out there to the black market, you have no idea what that cannabis is grown with, and that can be potentially very dangerous to someone's body.

Another thing I want to mention, that I don't think was brought up previously, is with regards to medical care. I believe having safe access to cannabis, or a legal access to cannabis, does promote medical care in a couple of ways. One is, you now have a patient who isn't afraid to tell their doctor that they use cannabis. And this just came about personally when I was at a physician's office, and he asked about drug use. And I wasn't quite sure how to answer that. I'm not a regular cannabis user; I'm the first to say I do not use this on a regular basis. But I thought about other people who might use cannabis, but might not really know what to

tell their doctor about it; because it's not as harmful as some of the other drugs we have out there. So I do believe safe access to cannabis can help strengthen the doctor-patient relationship, and also help prevent people who get into other substances. The opioid crisis -- we've all been hearing about the opioid crisis -- I do believe cannabis can help curb the opioid crisis.

If you look at this on a criminal side, the two speakers before me both had somewhat conflicting opinions on the criminal. I think with regards to expungement, we should look at lesser crimes, nonviolent crimes, for small amounts of cannabis, and maybe consider expunging those people so that they can now participate in the industry. I do believe there is a huge disparity with regards to criminal prosecution towards the black and the Latino community; and I do believe that hinders that community quite greatly to get into the cannabis world.

So I do believe that there should be a range, a sliding scale; obviously, some of the more violent and serious cannabis crimes should not be expunged; but I think some of the lower level nonviolent crimes should be looked at.

Economics-wise -- if you guys do follow any of the statistics that have come out-- Recently, they are now estimating, by 2022, that cannabis will exceed over \$22 billion in sales; and also, more interestingly, 2018 is expected to be the first year where recreational cannabis will exceed medical cannabis in sales.

That's pretty much it. I'll open it up to questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Mr. Singh.

Any questions from the Committee?

Vice Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: You said you had a couple of dispensaries in California.

MR. SINGH: Actually, cultivation. So we primarily just do cultivation; sorry, not dispensaries.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay. Well, what do you think that -- why do you think they put such a high tax on marijuana out there? There's such an abundance in the black market; I mean, why -- how do they think they could possibly compete?

MR. SINGH: So California, although being the pioneer in this industry, kind of came late to the table when it came to the legalization of it. The most interesting number that I could probably see out of all of this is that, since 2014, Colorado has exceeded over \$1 billion in tax revenue from the sale of recreational marijuana. But if you look at California, on average, the last couple of years, has only been bringing in about \$30 million a year. So -- and obviously California is a state that's probably eight or nine times the size of Colorado, population wise.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Yes.

MR. SINGH: But they've, sort of, come late to the table; and they're now trying to play catchup. Unfortunately, that's hurt a lot of businesses; a lot of small mom-and-pops in California are going out.

And one of the other big issues that we see in California is they restrict your cultivation to 22,500 square feet. So once you get to the point -- the threshold of about 10,000 square feet, your grow really isn't profitable in California. So anyone who's less than 10,000 square feet--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'm sorry; can you repeat that statistic?

MR. SINGH: Sure.

When you hit the threshold of about 10,000 square feet -- if you fall below that on your grow in California, right now, your operation is not profitable because of the taxes, and because of the expenses, and the price of cannabis currently.

But we also have a ceiling now of 22,500 square feet; so we're kind of also choked by the state, and they're saying, "Well, you can't go over this; but you're not really profitable until you hit 10,000." So a lot of the small guys in this are being cut out.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Is that predominantly outdoor grows?

MR. SINGH: Both.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I mean, so the square footage has to be different for an indoor grow, right?

MR. SINGH: So I believe it's an acre-and-a-half for an outdoor grow. But indoor -- it would be 22,500, under lights.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Between 10,000--

MR. SINGH: Twenty-two thousand, five hundred is the maximum under lights for an indoor. But you really aren't profitable until you hit-- I mean, I'm looking at numbers that are profitable.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So indoor, is somewhere between 10,000 and--

MR. SINGH: And 22,500.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --and the cap.

MR. SINGH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And outdoor would be an acre-and-a-half, you said?

MR. SINGH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Interesting.

MR. SINGH: So it's really made a -- it's made a-- There's been a lot of pressure by the constituents in California to make this easier to give access to. But because of that high 40, 45 percent tax, you're still promoting a pretty healthy black market there; which is unfortunate, in my opinion. But it's a step in the right direction.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: But Mr. Singh--

Are you done?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I would just say, you know, I think-- Chairman, I think the problem they're having there -- I mean, why we keep going back to California is because of bad regulations--

MR. SINGH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: --and, you know, we're trying to get it right here.

MR. SINGH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: So, you know, if it's not working there -- and they're legalized -- we have to be very careful of overregulating, not regulating enough.

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I mean, it's quite a balance that we have to find with our laws here in New Jersey--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: --if it happens.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I have three quick questions.

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Your advice to New Jersey -- should there be a restriction on square footage grow area?

MR. SINGH: It's tricky; because, you know, it's kind of a -- it's a double-sided sword in the sense that if you don't put a restriction, you're going to have these massive conglomerates that are funded by outside companies, like Canadian -- there's a lot of Canadian money that's being dumped into the American cannabis market.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes.

MR. SINGH: So you'll have these massive operations; they'll put the mom-and-pops out of business. So I think it's something to consider about having a maximum size restriction. But at the same time, you want to promote the capitalism; you want to promote a free market, where people get access to a variety of products, where it could be cheaper. So it depends.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Where would you fall? If you were sitting here, where would you fall?

MR. SINGH: I would probably look at it regionally. You know, you do have--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Regionally?

MR. SINGH: --such as here, in Northern Jersey, where you have a higher population than you might somewhere in the central part of New Jersey. Maybe consider not having a restriction in larger markets, and maybe having a restriction in some of the smaller markets.

The other thing, too, is you have to look at the operator as well. And, you know, I'm a proponent of it not being vertically integrated.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Let me just jump in there.

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So we're talking about the grow capacity of a cultivator--

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --who doesn't have to be located-- Their location is almost irrelevant, because it's really -- what's relevant is the dispensary location.

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So, I mean, like Dunkin' Donuts, down the street, is selling doughnuts; where they're baked, we don't even know anymore.

MR. SINGH: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right? (laughter)

MR. SINGH: Right; yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Anywhere.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You know, that model has changed--

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --and there's a parallel to the cannabis industry. Who cares where the cultivator is, where the processor is?

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So I'm not sure I buy that end of it; but I am definitely interested in your theory on, you know, a cap--

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --so everyone else doesn't get bullied out, you know?

MR. SINGH: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Like what happened in the 1990s, with Home Depot, versus our local hardware stores. I totally get that. So the question is, where's that cap?

MR. SINGH: I would say that cap is probably in the 50,000- to 60,000-square-foot range. And I'm purely basing that off of personal experience. We have -- my Las Vegas cultivation is a 60,000-square foot cultivation. And that's--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: All right; well, if we go 50,000 to 60,000, and it goes bad, I'm coming to see you. (laughter)

MR. SINGH: And that, I think, is pretty much -- in my opinion, sort of -- the largest you can grow where it still makes sense for a small-time grower.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Your experience out West -- how they addressed the licensing; the access to licensing for the small business investors, and women, and minorities -- what did they do wrong, what did they do right, and what's your advice for New Jersey for inclusion?

MR. SINGH: So, actually, my experience, where what they did wrong would actually be Florida; which is not out West, which is my home state. I was born and raised in Florida.

Florida had restricted their medical access to a certain criteria; they had to be a nursery in business for 30-plus years, with a certain amount of plants in the ground. These were mostly geared towards our big orange groves that we have out in Florida.

The problem is, is when they made it so restrictive like that, they actually -- I don't know if it was intentionally or unintentionally, but -- cut out a lot of minorities. And frankly, 95 percent of the people who qualified for the licenses in Florida were not minority-owned; meaning, they are white, male-owned.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Rich white guys.

MR. SINGH: Yes, pretty much. Rich white guys who have been around forever, and they're the ones who got it.

Now, there's some controversy as to whether or not that was intentional; but I think that's where not having vertical integration comes into play. Because the resources that it might take to open up a dispensary or a microgrow is far less than it would be to open up a big, vertically integrated operation right now. So when you have an easier license to obtain, now we can include the minorities a little bit more, where they can now go out there and obtain a license easier. Because frankly, at the end of the day, unfortunately, the way it sounds -- but minorities just don't have access to the resources that white men do.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So based upon what you said, is there such a thing as a *profitable* microgrow? I mean, under 10,000 square feet, you said, would not be profitable.

MR. SINGH: Well, the reason it's not profitable in California is because of the taxes and the price of cannabis currently. So I think,

again, that's where taxes come into play -- like the speaker who spoke before me -- is, where do we come in? And I think what she had mentioned -- 20, 25 percent is a safe limit where we can still, sort of, keep off the black market, but still allow enough growth opportunity for those businesses that are getting involved.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MR. SINGH: And also, obviously, bringing quite a bit of tax revenue for the State and the local municipalities.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Mr. Singh.

Any other questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Just one brief question.

MR. SINGH: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: What has California done to address the black market? Is there any particular plan, anything that's been put in place, or--

MR. SINGH: So they are going to start to phase out some of the old licenses, the collectives, which is what has been in California since the early 1990s. But a collective, essentially, is that -- if you and I have a medical card, we now just hire an outside company to grow on our behalf. That's essentially what the market is in California, because it is illegal to grow marijuana, under the old laws. Obviously, since January 1, it's changed under Prop 64. But that's the old license right now.

That, of course, also promotes the black market; because now you have people who grow in their backyard, and they go to, essentially, these *cloud parties*, or -- they're like black market flea markets where, as long as you have a medical card, they'll sell it to you. And that's somewhat

regulated; but for the most part, it's unregulated. And it's not a total *black* market, but it's *gray*, you know? It's kind of a gray market.

And now that they've introduced Prop 64, unfortunately it's been a slow process because you have to get licensed locally first, and then apply for your state license. And they don't know what they're doing; it's taking forever right now. And I'll tell you that personally, from experience; we have nine licenses in California, and it's been tough to get those nine licenses.

They're now going to start phasing out those gray market licenses. So I think, in about a year or so, California will be in a much better position than it is right now. But right now, they're not handling it properly; yes, they're not addressing it.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any other questions? (no response)

Sir, thank you for your appearance and your testimony.

MR. SINGH: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Tom Armstrong, from the Cannabis Entitlements Division, a boutique and environmental consulting firm of Los Angeles, California. That's a lot of titles. (laughter)

Now, because you have a laptop there, you're not going to sit there and read a statement, are you?

T H O M A S A R M S T R O N G: No; it will be-- It's just notes, but it will be--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay; very good. We'll allow notes.

You have four minutes.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Okay; that's fine.

So I want to thank you all for having me here and speaking.

My name is Thomas Armstrong; I grew up in Franklin Township in Somerset County. I'm a graduate of Rutgers University; I studied environmental policy there.

And during my time at Rutgers I developed an interest in cannabis; eventually that led to an arrest. And while I was able to escape the life-changing ramifications of the cannabis conviction, it opened my eyes to the harsh realities of cannabis prohibition.

Currently, I live in Los Angeles; and I work for an environmental consulting firm where I spearhead the development of a cannabis entitlement division aimed at assisting cannabis operators with licensing and permitting, at both the municipal and state level. This experience has offered some valuable insight into how the regulated cannabis industry can effectively, symbiotically operate with non-cannabis businesses, while ensuring the health, stability, and economic viability of a community.

I would start by addressing the three areas of primary focus for this hearing: the economic, social justice, and public health implications.

First of all, economics -- I think we've all talked about taxes. But I think the one thing that no one has really talked about is the added value for ancillary industries. That's a huge, I think, point that needs to be brought up. And so there's what we call *non-cannabis touching businesses*,

which is a phrase that's commonly used to refer to businesses that deal with cannabis operators, but don't actually touch the plant, or deal with the cannabis byproducts. And there's a huge area for these businesses for potential growth and revenue; and those can be general contractors, lawyers, accountants, HVAC technicians, electricians, civil and mechanical structural engineers, architects, planners, real estate professionals, security armed guards, agronomists, horticulturists, manufacturers, metal fabricators, chemists, and marketing professionals; just to name a few.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You didn't mention glassblowers. (laughter)

MR. ARMSTRONG: That's very true as well.

So I think the added revenue generations for these ancillary industries is something that cannot be overstated.

In terms of public health, I think that -- my personal opinion, as well as supported by a lot of scientific research, is that the negative implications of cannabis legalization on public health are pretty limited. While there were some studies that indicated an uptick in emergency room visits in states where it was -- where there has been legalization, those were generally -- that surge occurred at the onset of legalization, where people were still learning how to properly and responsibly consume cannabis.

Those numbers have since come down, with the maturity of the market. In states with legalized cannabis, we really haven't seen, as other people have indicated, any increase in youth and teen usage, or any correlation between an increase in traffic incidents related to the use of cannabis.

And there has also been a positive correlation between cannabis and the reduction of opioids and opiate overdoses.

And then in terms of the social justice, I think that that's something -- that's probably the most important component of this whole thing. I think that I don't need to mention the disparity in the arrests between minority and non-minority communities. I think that as someone who has been arrested for a nonviolent cannabis crime -- while I was not convicted, I can personally attest to the burden, stress, and harm that those charges have on one's life, from difficulty in obtaining employment, to financial aid in college, and the devastating effects on family and friend relationships.

I just feel that arresting people for nonviolent cannabis convictions is something that should stop. It really serves no purpose in helping communities stay safe, and exacerbates the issue, a lot of times, by getting people entrenched in the legal justice system -- which, as you know, that once you get involved it's extremely hard to get out of. The recidivism rate is extremely high.

With that, I'll take some questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Members, any questions? (no response)

No?

Mr. Armstrong, thank you very much for your appearance and your testimony. (applause)

I'd like to call up Dr. Wilburt Yeung, representing the New Jersey Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists.

Good morning, Doctor.

WILBERT D. YEUNG, M.D.: Good morning.

Yes, my name is Dr. Wilbert Yeung; I'm a child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrist. As such, I am a physician who deals with mental health concerns in children, adolescents, and adults.

And I am here today on behalf of NJCCAP, the New Jersey Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; that is the professional organization of the child psychiatrists of New Jersey. So as such, I represent 200 to 250 child and adolescent psychiatrists here in New Jersey.

And I've actually submitted both some written testimony, as well as a flyer that goes over some science that we want to bring to the Committee's attention. I think that's available to all of you guys, but I just wanted to go over a few things there.

This current conversation about the legalization of marijuana -- recreational marijuana for 21 and up -- one might ask, why does that apply to us child and adolescent psychiatrists? And first of all, you know, one thing that I would highlight is that brain development in humans occurs through the age of 25. So when we discuss this, we are talking about increasing access to both a population where legal -- where there would be legal use for the 21 to 25 population; where the brains are still developing. However, there's also a lot of reason to believe that if we legalize at 21 and up, it's going to increase access -- illegal access to those who are under 21 as well. So that's something we want to highlight; and we want to make sure it goes into this conversation.

Also we want to focus this conversation on the recreational marijuana, as well as, you know -- keep this conversation separate from

decriminalization; because decriminalization and legalization are two separate topics.

I want to highlight the fact that the effects of cannabis use in adolescents are actually well-documented. There are studies that demonstrate decreased academic performance, increased dropout rates from school, decreased college enrollment, and decreased educational achievement.

We also know that there is an increase in rates of and worsening of psychotic disorders, including a two-to-five-time increase in schizophrenia, mood, and anxiety disorders in children and adolescents who use marijuana. I used to work at Hackensack Medical Center on an adult unit; but I was -- an adult psychiatric unit, that was. And I normally took care of the 18-, 19-, 20-, 21-year-olds who were admitted to that unit. And I can tell you that, at any given time, we would have at least one or two kids who had no prior psychiatric history, who had no other substance use except marijuana, who would present completely psychotic.

So any conversation that marijuana is safe-- Put it this way: It depends on what you mean by *safe*. It's true that someone may not die of a medical overdose of marijuana; however, if you're psychotic, and you're aggressive, and you're agitated-- And I can tell you stories about the kids who, from Rutgers, were found, you know, after a party, naked in the bushes, screaming about the spy helicopters, and the police coming to pick them up -- okay? -- who were brought to our hospital and admitted. And again, no prior psychiatric history; no other ingestions except marijuana.

So I do want to speak to that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: But before you go on, you say *except for marijuana*. But you don't know that it was just marijuana, right? You don't know what was in there. (applause)

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, put it this way--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Please, please, please, please; we're having a conversation.

DR. YEUNG: Well, put it this way. I mean, you know, we have urine toxicology screens, okay? We can screen them for ingestion of other substances. It's true; it does not test for every single illicit additive out there, so I will concede that. But the point is that marijuana itself has been demonstrated to have psychoactive effects.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sure; so in the cases that you just stated, which compound in marijuana would lead somebody-- I understand it doesn't lead everybody, or else we wouldn't be here. Which compound would it be, or which combination of compounds, would lead the susceptible person to go uncontrollably psychotic? (laughter)

DR. YEUNG: So, you know, from what we know, the implication is that THC would be the component that is most psychoactive. And regarding that, the reality is that the percentage -- the potency of THC in the marijuana strains that are out there today has risen dramatically since the 1990s. I mean, back then--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Of the plant content, or the processed product content?

DR. YEUNG: Well, the marijuana that is available to people right now, is what I'm trying to say; and of course that--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right; because the plant can only have a certain-- It has a maximum how much THC can naturally grow.

DR. YEUNG: Well, you can breed for strains that have higher THC.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right; but they have a limit where, you know, a processed product doesn't have that same limit.

DR. YEUNG: Well, that's true. I mean, there are concerns about processed products being even higher potency. But the point is, that even what is cultivated are strains that are higher in THC content, lower in CBD content--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right.

DR. YEUNG: --than previously. For example, in the 1990s, you were talking about an average of 3 percent; nowadays, you know, the average strain is estimated to be 12 percent -- okay? -- in terms of THC; which is, again, the psychoactive product that we're concerned about.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: In your experience in the psych ward, did you see these psychotic episodes as much with adults as the children? Were children more susceptible to those episodes?

DR. YEUNG: Right. So what I would say is this -- is that, first of all, I think that you bring up a very good point, okay? I think that the adolescent and young adult brain certainly is more vulnerable.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

DR. YEUNG: Again, brain development occurs after the age of 25. I'm here specifically today to speak on behalf of the New Jersey Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; in other words, for the children

and adolescents. So it is, perhaps, a different animal in adults, okay? But our concern is this -- is that if you legalize for 21 and up, you are going to hit a population, the 21- to 25-year-olds, legally, where their brains are still in development. But you're also going to increase access, frankly, for those who are under 21. I mean, generally speaking, for example--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You feel the access will increase?

DR. YEUNG: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You know, as a parent, I'm looking at my kid. She can barely operate a TV remote, toaster oven; certainly she isn't cleaning her room. But she figured out how to get marijuana in the house.

DR. YEUNG: Of course.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: The access is already out there. It's been like-- When I was in high school, I didn't participate -- for the record. (laughter)

But, you know, she figured out how to get it; you know, it's out there. You know, the availability is saturated; it's almost effortless. Do you recognize that?

DR. YEUNG: I do recognize that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: It took me weeks to get rid of that stuff, once I found it.

DR. YEUNG: I tell parents all the time -- it doesn't matter who your kid is; your kid could be the straight-A student. He knows where to get marijuana, if he wants, in his high school.

But the point is that I think that there will be increased access even beyond that, number one; and number two, again, with all due respect, I think that in your generation, the marijuana was a little different than what your daughter's going to be exposed to right now.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Agreed.

DR. YEUNG: And there are statistics-- And again, all this is in the flyer that I've made available to you guys. There is a University of Michigan study that shows you that there is an inverse correlation between marijuana use in high schoolers versus the perceived risks. So in other words, when they track, from the 1970s until now, they can show that when there is a lower perceived risk, there is higher use. And so one of our great concerns here is that there isn't enough education right now about the potential dangers of marijuana use in the developing brain in children and adolescents.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Doctor, as a professional, do you recognize any benefit for one or more of the compounds in marijuana?

DR. YEUNG: Well, actually I would defer on that because, again, that's a discussion about medical marijuana. I'm trying to speak specifically to recreational marijuana use; the legalization of recreational marijuana use.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay; so you have great concerns with recreational marijuana; specifically, your concerns are heightened with adolescence and their developing minds. And you're open to medical and, let me guess, with science behind it--

DR. YEUNG: Of course.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --the research studies, protocols; possibly even with an integration of curriculum with academia, and industry, and community -- like that. Is that fair to say?

DR. YEUNG: So the official stance of NJCCAP--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Uh-oh. (laughter)

DR. YEUNG: --okay -- our position statement is, we specifically oppose any legislation that would increase use other than for medical and research purposes in adolescents.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: That's fair.

I'm sure there are questions.

Member Wimberly.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Thank you, Doctor; good morning.

DR. YEUNG: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: These psychotic episodes -- were these patients who had tampered-with marijuana? Was this, obviously, black market marijuana; was it laced marijuana; was it, you know -- or was it the case of mostly (indiscernible)?

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, by definition, it would be black market marijuana because there wasn't any legalized marijuana; yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: I'm saying, but were there any incidences that, obviously through testing, showed that this was not just a regular strain of marijuana, and this was marijuana that was tampered with -- fentanyl or whatever it may be?

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, put it this way: It wasn't showing up laced for opiates, if that was the question, because it would be--

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Or any other -- was it laced with anything else? I mean, because most cases I've heard of, when it comes to psychotics, it was not just regular marijuana; it was, like, they say--

DR. YEUNG: But how would that be proven?

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: I guess by testing, through blood testing, or anything else you do in your hospital.

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, one of the limitations of this standard testing is this.

Excuse me? I'm sorry; I'm having a hard time--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Continue on, please.

DR. YEUNG: --urine toxicology screening tests for the most common substances that are abused. So it is not testing for every substance known, or compound known to man, okay? So it's true, to your point, that theoretically this marijuana could have been laced, okay? I can't say one way or another, because--

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: You don't test for it.

DR. YEUNG: Well, we don't necessarily have tests for every single thing that people lace it with.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: You probably should have tests for everything.

DR. YEUNG: Well, it's not standard procedure.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: I mean, that's something that maybe you want to bring back to your organization; because, like I said, the cases that I've known of, it's always been tampered with. It's been something that the person didn't know what they were getting into.

So it's not a-- Obviously, it's a black market situation. But I think if my child-- Look, I have four kids; hopefully they don't smoke; I don't smoke. But if there's a case that, all of a sudden, somebody has a psychotic episode -- be it with marijuana, be -- whatever it may be -- I think there should be testing in place to see what was in the drug that they had, or whatever they ingested, or whatever it may be.

DR. YEUNG: That may be a good point, but that's not--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Member Wimberly, if I may interject.

I'll explain to you offline, maybe later; but the toxicology testing of this stuff -- the way it's done -- it's either cost-prohibitive, it's facility-prohibited. You just simply can't test for every compound known to man in a sample. You might not even have enough sample of blood, urine, or saliva, or whatever. You just can't -- it's impossible to test for everything.

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: Thank you, Chairman. I mean, that's what I was getting at. I just wanted to say that.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right; I mean--

DR. YEUNG: Yes, that's what I would say. I mean, it's not standard testing. When somebody comes into the hospital emergency room, you cannot do a panel that is every single chemical out there.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Right. Some tests -- if you're lucky, you can do a street-level test, and it turns from clear to blue; and some tests can take weeks, and weeks, and weeks to get-- You'll never achieve that level--

ASSEMBLYMAN WIMBERLY: So it's determined to be impractical to test for all this stuff.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Absolutely.

DR. YEUNG: So the bottom line is that we're concerned about this -- is that legalization of recreational use, for even those over 21, is going to increase access for a vulnerable population. We don't feel that there is enough being done in terms of prevention, education, steps to limit diversion to the children and adolescents; which, frankly, I see every day in my practice

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I share many of your concerns, Doctor.

Any other questions?

Member.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Thank you.

Doctor, we heard before at some of our other hearings about the development up until the age of 25. Can you give me the Cliff Notes' version of the manner in which the brain continues to develop until age 25?

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, there-- Put it this way: I mean, we have brain cells, and there are obviously connections between the brain cells; that's how they communicate with each other. And that process of pruning and development of certain parts of the brain-- Whereas, you know, again pruning and strengthening the connections in other part of the brain is a process that, frankly, happens until 25 years of age. To us, we're talking about two fundamentally different questions -- whether you're talking about substance use in an older population, versus substance use in a younger population. And I'm here today to speak to the substance use in

that younger population, and the concerns that legalization, even for 21 and up, may increase access for that younger population -- that at-risk population.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: I understand that. Can you explain a little bit more specifically, however, how THC impacts the development of the brain cells, and the neuro connectors, or what have you?

DR. YEUNG: Well, THC, frankly, as well as actually a lot of other substances that people ingest -- I mean, alcohol would be another example of it -- is a toxic substance to the body. I mean, it's something -- this is why the body detoxifies it and gets rid of it. But the point is, that there is neurotoxicity that is related to that, okay? You're hitting these brain cells at a point when they're still maturing; the connections are still being formalized; and there's damage that is done that is irreversible and irreparable.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: And that was going to be my next question.

I believe a prior witness, at a prior hearing, referenced any effect of ingestion for those under the age of 25 would create, in effect -- which would dissipate after 48 hours. That's not what you're telling us today.

DR. YEUNG: So you will see data that goes both ways on a lot of these issues; even some of the data that was presented earlier today, for example, saying things like there has been no demonstrated increased use in children and adolescents in states that have legalized. I mean, frankly, there are statistics out there that would tell you exactly the opposite, okay?

So I'm not saying that there may have been a study that said exactly what you're saying; but I'm telling you that, from our review of the literature, the body of data that's out there, we have a lot of evidence of the contrary.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: And I know the age of 25 is probably being used as a general example as to when the brain has fully developed. Does the impact -- is the impact greater the lesser the age?

DR. YEUNG: The impact is greater the younger you are. In fact, if you look at -- for example, people who begin using marijuana before the age of 18 are four to seven times more likely to develop a cannabis use disorder, frankly, than adults, okay? So there's a higher addiction potential, and there's a higher potential for damage and loss of brain function, as well, the younger you are.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Okay; and just to take that one step further, is some of your concern that legalization will result in households having marijuana present -- much like you used to raid mom and dad's liquor cabinet when they were away (laughter) -- and are we now going to be confronting something similar with marijuana and teenagers, you know, waiting for their parents to go away? Is that part of your concern that you're expressing to us?

DR. YEUNG: Well, I mean, that might be simply one way that there might be increased access; but I think that there are other ways that there might be increased access. I mean, it's like teenagers commenting to me that they are not even aware that there is a -- what the age is at which you can buy cigarettes. I mean, the reality is, it's not necessarily because there are cigarettes sitting in the house; I mean, cigarettes are everywhere; they can find cigarettes if they want. And our concern is not only are they

raiding mom and dad's marijuana at home -- okay? -- but frankly, if it's out there, it's out there, and it's going to increase access.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: And you alluded to this upon questioning from the Chairman -- but the marijuana that is being made available, as we continue to develop the industry, is of such quality that it presents more of a concern for its effect upon the youth. Would that be accurate?

DR. YEUNG: Yes; I mean, the psychoactive compound-- I mean, the reality is that marijuana itself has cannabinoid products, okay? There are multiple chemicals in it. The ones that normally come to our attention most are THC and CBD; specifically, THC is the component that is felt to be psychoactive, and in the strains that are available now, that percentage has been on the rise since the 1990s. And that is what the concern is. It's not a-- We focus on it mostly to say that -- this is not a conversation necessarily about the marijuana that you knew 20, 30 years ago.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Correct.

Thank you; I appreciate your explanation.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you, Chairman.

Doctor, with respect to the children, the adolescents -- if they were to have exposure to the second-hand pot smoking, if you will, is there any evidence of negative impacts to brain development with the exposure of that second-hand pot smoke?

DR. YEUNG: Yes; I would say that I don't know that we have enough research on that right now, okay? I mean, one could hypothesize, certainly, because-- And you can extrapolate from what we do know about second-hand tobacco smoke, okay? But I don't know that there's been enough studied about that specifically.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Seeing no other questions--

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I think I have one question.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: You know, we're talking about legalizing marijuana; but right now, I mean, I'm sure a lot of people do marijuana now. Could you just say what kind of effect it would be, or what would be the result? Because we're talking about marijuana on the brain development; I'm sure that that has happened quite often. Could you just give us, like, what kind of result can happen to somebody? What would you say the results are -- of what we could look for, what the problems would be?

DR. YEUNG: Well, I would say that, you know, my personal experience -- being a physician who spends most of their time in practice -- I mean, I come here today, really, speaking as a concerned citizen and as a representative of our professional organization. But day-to-day, I spend all my time seeing children and adolescents.

And I would say that, in my experience, what I see personally is in line with what the data coming back from these studies would indicate, which is that there is an increased use (*sic*) of psychotic disorders, okay?

There is the possible worsening of the mood and anxiety symptoms -- okay? -- in a lot of the kids who we see. I do have a lot of kids where -- the parents are bringing the children in and, you know, the concern is that they have the low energy, low motivation; they're having difficulties academically. So probably I see lower academic performance and increased school dropout rates. I mean, so, again, what would be noted on a national level, I see on a day-to-day level.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay; thank you, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any other questions? (no response)

Doctor, I just want to say that we appreciate your appearance and your testimony.

DR. YEUNG: Thank you for the time. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Jay Hibbard.

J A Y M. H I B B A R D: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

My name is Jay Hibbard; I am Vice President of Government Relations for the Distilled Spirits Council. (laughter)

So thanks for the opportunity to be with you.

Let me start by stating, for the record, that the Distilled Spirits Council does not have a position on the legalization of marijuana. So for those who may have been expecting some fireworks or--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I was. (laughter)

MR. HIBBARD: I knew you probably -- I knew somebody was.

You're going to be disappointed to hear that we are neutral on this subject.

We've heard, many times, from proponents that they would like to see marijuana legalized under the same retail and regulatory scheme as beverage alcohol; in fact, the legislation you referred to earlier make a number of declarations that say taxing, controlling, and legalizing marijuana for adults, like alcohol.

So let me speak to some of those things.

The Council has a series of guiding principles for states that are considering legalization. Let me start with taxation.

We believe that the taxation and regulation of marijuana is at least comparable to the taxation and regulation of distilled spirits. So spirits, as you can probably guess, are one of the most highly taxed and regulated products in the marketplace. Here, in New Jersey, the average price (*sic*) paid for a bottle of spirits is 37.5 percent. When you add in the Federal excise tax, it's over 50 percent. So when we talk about equal treatment, or treatment like alcohol, we say keep those things in mind.

Ensure that any efforts to legalize marijuana include the 21-year-old legal purchase age and use requirement. I think that is part of the conversation that's been taking place here in New Jersey. In the beverage alcohol space, we have a very robust and strong effort to prevent underage access to alcohol. Our code of marketing practices speaks very specifically to that; and how our members can advertise, market, and promote their products, and make sure that you must be 21 years old to obtain our products.

We'd like to see you insist on the development of a standard of measurement of marijuana-induced impairment, similar to the blood alcohol levels in statute.

So unlike alcohol and the BAC level that clearly show when someone is impaired to drive, there is no comparable test or scientific standard established for determining THC impairment. States, and the Federal government, should be pushing hard to develop those standards and ensure safety on the roadways.

We'd like to see you advocate for the development of a roadside impairment test for marijuana, such as the breathalyzer test for alcohol. Similar to the lack of standard measurement for impairment, there is no manner by which to reliably and accurately determine someone's THC level at the point of interdiction.

So perhaps, in consideration of the legislation, you would consider dedicating sufficient revenues to determine a scientifically sound impairment standard, as well as that roadside testing technology.

Ensure that the same penalties exist for driving under the influence of marijuana, or other intoxicants, as there are today for driving under the influence of beverage alcohol. The penalties for driving under the influence of THC should be no less than those for driving under the influence of alcohol.

A lower per se level of impairment, as well as increased penalties for higher levels of THC, like those that exist for high BAC offenses, should also apply; something that our surveys indicate that the American public is very strongly supportive of.

Ensure that testing and reporting of the presence of marijuana, as well as alcohol, is required for all highway fatalities. I don't think there's any question that that's a standard that should be adhered to by all jurisdictions so that we can evaluate the impact of increased marijuana use and the traffic safety implications.

And then, finally, require that all marijuana products disclose the THC dose in a manner similar to the alcohol-by-volume declarations that are on all of our products. By Federal law, as you know, all beverages -- all alcoholic beverages sold in the U.S. must declare the alcohol by volume; and the transparency and disclosure at the retail point of sale should apply to any retail sale of a product containing THC.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sir, we're out of time.

MR. HIBBARD: That's it, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to be with you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I appreciate it.

Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I'd just say--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: --I agree wholeheartedly on your recommendations.

MR. HIBBARD: Great; we appreciate that.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes; I tend to agree with at least most of what you said.

MR. HIBBARD: Great.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Gentlemen, anything? (no response)

Thank you very much for your appearance and your testimony.

MR. HIBBARD: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Tara Misu Sargente, from Blazin' Bakery.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: (off mike) She had to step out.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: All right.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: She'll be right back.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Justin Albert.

J U S T I N E S C H E R A L B E R T: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, first of all, thank you very much for doing this. Thank you for bringing this out to the people. This should happen on other topics as well.

Thank you to the General Assembly for coming out and getting the voice of the people.

This is really important, not just on this issue, but just everything that the General Assembly does. So thank you for that.

I'm just going to run through a few things here, starting with-- Cannabis is out there; people already access it. They already exercise the personal liberty; they do so responsibly. It's already accessible for children; an adult-regulated market will provide the safe and legal access that adults are looking for, and the responsible members of the cannabis community are going to be able to develop a smarter messaging that actually resonates

with children. We'll now be able to set the example for what responsible use looks like and have that resonate.

By the way, we are going to have the ability to run case studies of other industries, such as alcohol, such as tobacco, such as -- even the gaming industry, and whatnot; and look at what has worked and what has not worked. And in the cannabis industry and cannabis community we're actually going to have the opportunity to improve upon those efforts.

The State of New Jersey, 40 years ago, let ownership of gaming roll right out of the state. We shouldn't do that this time; we should keep ownership in the state.

People have a natural right to cultivate and use this plant for themselves. People are inherently free; our State motto is *Liberty and Prosperity*. What we need to focus on is regulating corporate actions so that the corporations don't take their profit and run out of the state.

We also need to look at banking, and make sure that the people who are in this industry are banking locally and keeping that money here in the state. Look to whom they're paying rents. If all the money is flowing right out to real estate investment trusts, we're really undermining the industry from the get-go.

The black market issue has come up a number of times. In other states, people have the right to home cultivation. Now, that doesn't mean that you can rent out a home and fill it up with plants. But people have the natural right to cultivate for themselves, and to share with friends. And we're not looking for a high regulator scheme for that personal relationship, no different than home brewing or sharing a tomato. But certainly we want to create the opportunity so that people who want to step

up their game and exercise that economic liberty to do so -- whether in growing, or baking, or just distribution in general -- they should have the opportunity to do so. And we need to make sure that we make the real estate available for them to do so, and the credit for them to do so.

The adolescents -- I think I hit on that already. Kids are already using it. We're going to do a better job with that as we get to legalization.

And if you'll give me the -- one more point here--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Just to let you know, you need to wrap it up.

MR. ALBERT: I will.

I'll tell you what -- that is it for right now.

I thank you for coming out to the people; I thank you for hearing us. Let's do this with a broad sense of liberty and prosperity, and make everyone -- give everyone a chance to be a part of it.

Thank you very much. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

Andres Castillo; Andres Castillo. (no response)

Okay; calling back Tara Misu Sargente, from Blazin' Bakery

TARA MISU SARGENTE: Hello; sorry I stepped out.

Thank you so much for hearing me.

So I just want to address a couple of things I think need addressing, from some prior people who went up.

And there continues to be this glorification-- Oh, about my background. I've been manufacturing a cannabis product in the State of New Jersey for eight years; my specialty is in extraction and edibles.

So a lot of people have been glorifying this cannabis use -- to have 3 percent. And it's such an irrational train of thought because, it's like saying, "Well, non-alcoholic beer has half-a-percent, so we should just have people drink two cases of that if they want to get a buzz," you know? If you're smoking cannabis, do you really want to have to smoke a pound of it to get high? Not really, you know? So let's make Scotch illegal; that's too strong.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Hey, now. (laughter)

MS. SARGENTE: Exactly, exactly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'll run you out of here.
(laughter)

MS. SARGENTE: And then, if you also think of the environmental impact of growing marijuana that has a low potency, you're using more water, you're using more electric. So you want something that has a higher concentration, you know? So this is something that's been an improvement; and to frown upon progress through a biased lens is just not acceptable. (applause)

Thank you.

Something else I want -- Assemblyman Wimberly left, but the Spice, which -- maybe this could be relayed -- I've been vending at events across the country for eight years now. And Spice had a peak in popularity, where I would go to a convention down in Atlantic City, and every third booth would be, "We have Spice! Spice here!" There was this website--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What is *Spice*?

MS. SARGENTE: Spice is when they take a plant that looks like marijuana, and they spray it with a chemical. So they hose it down

with, say, a formaldehyde, or a synthetic opiate, or something, because people who do not have access to legitimate marijuana will seek something elsewhere.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Really?

MS. SARGENTE: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE: (off mike)

Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Did you guys know about that?

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE: (off mike)

Yes, (indiscernible).

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Easy, easy. (laughter)

MS. SARGENTE: We'll talk later.

So the problem with this now-- So there's this synthetic Spice on the market. I would go to these conventions, and every third booth would be, "We have Spice." And then people died. And the next year, at the convention, Spice lawyers everywhere.

So, you know -- and then-- But on the flip side of that, now I go out to Colorado, and I have a booth there -- there's not a single Spice booth. Because people want the real thing; and you're going to create bootleggers, a black market; you're going to create-- People want what they want; and if you don't give it to them, they'll find something else. And if you're having unregulated moonshine of the marijuana industry, people are going to die and get hurt. I mean, that's just -- that's not what I'm here to speak about, but I just felt I had to address the potency and the Spice issues, because there's more to both of those.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What's your product that you mentioned earlier?

MS. SARGENTE: So I have a product that has been firmly within the legal realm of operations in New Jersey for eight years. People add their own herb to it, and it's an optimized brownie mix that will make it stronger. So it has ingredients, such as coconut oil, soy lecithin, emulsifier, and pharmaceuticals. It makes an edible that anyone with no experience, in any jurisdiction, can make for themselves without breaking any laws; and it allows patients who, in a state where we are tragically behind in edible production -- they can maybe medicate morning, noon, and night with specific strains, you know, without having access to the edibles that people do in other states.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So your product, also, comes with -- it's some culinary science--

MS. SARGENTE: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --along with the science of the marijuana.

So have you -- as a female business owner, have you reviewed the proposed -- one or more proposed legislations, as it relates to your access to a license opportunity?

MS. SARGENTE: Absolutely. I've reviewed all the bills, adult-use, and--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: All of them.

MS. SARGENTE: All of them. They're long; you guys could be briefer.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: That's a lot of reading.
(laughter)

Okay, so you reviewed all of them. What's your overall impression?

MS. SARGENTE: So speaking on Conaway's most recent medical Bill -- one thing that I think is slightly biased is they are giving -- not *giving*, but *allowing* 15 percent to women, and minority, and veteran-owned businesses on the dispensary end. Now, the dispensaries are great, but they're also the lower-hanging fruit. They're the liquor stores; they're not the liquor distributors. The distributing equivalent -- which is processing and cultivation -- there's no allowance for women or minorities. And I think 15 percent of those licenses -- which would just be 1, because they're only issuing 12, and 6 are being grandfathered -- at least 1 of those should be guaranteed to not be going to a wealthy white male. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So there's no allowance -- there's no allowance outside the dispensaries--

MS. SARGENTE: There are no allowances; and I really feel that needs to be worked into the Bill -- that 15 percent of each of the licenses will be--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And a product like yours has more to do with a processors' license, should there be one --

MS. SARGENTE: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --more than a cultivator or dispensary.

MS. SARGENTE: And two things on that: Firstly, one thing you said before is, how could a woman or minority compete when they have

experience, but they've, you know, broken laws prior and been punished for it. How can we give people who have experience-- But there have been ways to get experience without breaking the law. As I said, I've been doing this for eight years, I have an immaculate record, and I have considerable experience. And I've passed on many opportunities -- that would have been very lucrative over the years -- because they were illegal.

So the people who have taken part in these illegal practices in the marijuana industry -- you could have had ancillary businesses. I've sat with lawyers -- which is not fun -- many a day, to make sure I did not break those laws. And they have been rewarded, because they made 10 times the money I could have, selling something illegal.

So, you know -- so there are opportunities for experience. And it may be harder to find those women or those minorities, but they're out there. And I think there should be some reward for the people who have gone out of their way to stay within the laws of the State of New Jersey the entire journey.

Additionally, the processing license -- so we're grandfathering in the six dispensaries; and they've taken a lot of bumps and bruises, and that's great; but they're experienced-- Because of the former Administration, there was no processing; we have no edibles. So they have great experience in cultivation and retail, but they don't have experience in processing. So to automatically grandfather them in isn't really logical, because they don't have experience over someone who, maybe, has a manufacturing, and edible, and extraction background. We're just giving it to them because they're there already.

So are you really doing a service to the people by not giving them to people who have the experience, and are you just diluting the product that we'll be giving the public?

So maybe a consideration is to not necessarily grandfather in the processing license, because there is no processing in New Jersey. And if you do, maybe it's not guaranteed that they're not just going to go around and flip it, because they can't use it anyway. And then we end up paying double what we would've, you know? So I think that's a real consideration.

And the number of them is low; I believe I said that last time I spoke. But the number-- To give out 12 processing and cultivation -- and several people mentioned that -- that several dozen would make more sense.

And if you're not willing to give out the large licenses, someone else also mentioned a micro license. Craft licenses are so important because, if you think about-- Go back to beer. Would you only want Bud and Coors; would you only want McDonalds and Burger King? Or would you want that great, you know, "Who makes this?" "Oh, you have to try this product. It's," you know, "dietary, vegan, gluten-free." "Oh, it's this great little brewery out of," you know, "my local hometown." You want to give people who make really great products-- And if you only give it to 6 major distributors, you're only going to get mass commercial products, and you're really going to miss out on giving people some excellent opportunities for craft products. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Do you have any recommendations on how we should approach the licensing to have more access, to have more diversity?

MS. SARGENTE: Sure. I think you need to -- obviously, focusing on women and minorities is excellent. I think you need to look for people within the State of New Jersey, because as I've said, there's--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: In the state.

MS. SARGENTE: In state, because you have people flooding in from out of state, and even out of the country.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Out of the country.

MS. SARGENTE: There's so much money coming in from Canada right now. And I think we really need to try to reward the people who have not fled to Colorado and California, and have tried to stay here and put money back into our communities and our state. And remember them on the licenses; and look at their history, not necessarily experience that came from elsewhere.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Good point.

Vice Chairman, do have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Gentlemen? (no response)

Ms. Sargente, thank you very much for your appearance and testimony.

MS. SARGENTE: All right; thank you all. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Andrew Lawrence, Duglaw.

And I'll also call up Kevin Duncan.

KEVIN DUGAN: Dugan.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Dugan.

MR. DUGAN: Yes.

A N D R E W L A W R E N C E: Thank you, guys, for taking the time.

I understand that this is sometimes more an exercise in patience, rather than anything else.

Me and my partner, Kevin -- we're your typical mom-and-pop person looking to get a retail license.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Which one's the mom, which one's the pop? (laughter)

MR. DUGAN: No comment.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes; no comment. Let's not -- this is a partnership, so--

So what I wanted to address with you guys is, actually, specifics inside the law, inside the proposed bill that we have; and kind of the differences between the two. And where I see, as a person who's looking to open up a shop, the problems, and the difficulties, and maybe the pros and cons of the differences in the two bills.

The first point that I wanted to bring up is the number of retail licenses being proposed in the two bills. There's no cap on the Bill being proposed in the Senate right now; I believe it's Bill No. 830.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Who's Bill?

MR. LAWRENCE: See, I don't know the exact--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: (off mike)
Scutari.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you; yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Oh, Scutari's Bill.

MR. LAWRENCE: Scutari's Bill.

The only language inside that Bill is that there would be at least one license given out for every legislative district; there are 40 in the State of New Jersey. Whereas the Bill that's actually being reviewed now suggests one, I believe, license being given out for each legislative district -- meaning 40 -- and then moving to a total of two later on, in some underdetermined time; maybe next year. So we'd move to 80.

A concern that I have with that is really -- is that truly enough licenses to service the urban areas; you know, particularly, you know, places like Newark, places like Hoboken, Jersey City. There's a lot of, not just people living there consuming cannabis; but there's also-- You know, these are high-traffic commuter areas; and people who shop in these areas don't necessarily live in these communities. I would urge and hope that we would take a further look at that.

And, you know, the minimum of having one license per legislative area I think is very important, and very key to these Bills. But I think we need to have some sort of flexibility, especially in high population areas, so that there are enough licenses out there to meet the demand.

I think that everyone who spoke before me clearly spoke to that idea, that-- You know, this is a state of 6 million (*sic*) people, and it might even be a \$1 billion industry. If you limit those licenses at the beginning, you're kind of -- you're creating an elite class of people who are going to capture this business, and then everyone licensed subsequent to them is going to be playing catchup. And I caution against that, only in the spirit of capitalism.

The next thing I wanted to discuss is -- and I think we've bandied this idea about here, and I believe the Assembly Bill speaks to it

directly -- and that's the foundation of a Division of Marijuana in the State of New Jersey to control how it's regulated. As a person looking to be a small business owner in the industry, I think that's so vitally important with an industry that's new like this, and evolving, and changing all the time. And clearly I don't think that there's a full grasp of understanding about the specifics of all the different products from anyone here. I think, you know, collectively we may have all the information; but I don't think there's any-- You know, you couldn't put together three people who could tell you every little nuance of everything going on in this very complex industry.

So I think it's vitally important that whatever Bill gets passed forms not only a Division of Marijuana -- or whatever you would want to call it -- but also allows that the specifics of regulation and the power to change those specifics of regulation be inside of that Council, rather than would have to be passed in new law. We can clearly see that that takes time, and in an industry that's moving and evolving so quickly, I think New Jersey would service itself best by enabling a small committee, that is expert and specified in this industry, to really make the changes necessary in a really evolving marketplace.

And in my final point on it -- and I know that Assemblyman Wimberly, he's not here right now -- but there's a real concern about the black market. I'd like to tie that to what we're proposing as the tax rate for cannabis. In a direct correlation, every single percentage of tax that you put on marijuana will be given to the customer. The customer takes on those costs, in one form or another. If you overtax this product, you will create a parallel black market or a parallel gray market; it's just the reality of the

situation. I stress that because I feel like a 20 percent to 25 percent tax range is vital so that small businesses -- like ours would potentially be -- would be able to actually thrive and exist in the state for years to come.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Just for clarity--

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --what is your business?

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, we're not a business yet.

MR. DUGAN: (indiscernible).

MR. LAWRENCE: We're interested in licensing for retail.

MR. DUGAN: A retail dispensary.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: All right; dispensary.

MR. LAWRENCE: Exactly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Okay; you're up.

MR. DUGAN: I don't have anything to add.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You're done. (laughter)

MR. DUGAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

Any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Well, I have one.

MR. LAWRENCE: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Would you also -- you would want to just grow your own products, as well, and sell?

MR. LAWRENCE: I'm not interested in a vertically integrated model. I know that that's hotly contested amongst entrepreneurs. My background is in branding, and I think that that's the future of this industry

-- branding product, branding a retail experience. And that's really my interests.

So I'm not so interested in being a grower; I'm not interested in making edibles. I'm interested in creating a retail experience so that, you know, older folks in New Jersey can feel comfortable buying marijuana.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, gentlemen, for your appearance and testimony.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate it.

MR. DUGAN: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay; our Chairman is stepping out; I'll be filling in for him while he's gone.

And I think our next one will be Andres Castillo, if he's here.
(no response)

Okay; he's not here.

Okay, our next one will be Jeffrey Bowen.

J E F F R E Y B O W E N: Good morning, everybody.

I'd like to say good morning to this panel, and all the people who are paying attention.

(addresses the audience) Thank you all for showing up; it's important.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you for being here.

MR. BOWEN: I beg your pardon?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: And thank you for being here.

MR. BOWEN: You're welcome.

My name is Jeffrey Bowen; I'm a registered nurse. I work in the operating room at a local hospital.

I've been interested in marijuana since the 1960s; everybody, you know, just from my point of view-- I didn't really think I had a lot to say when I came in here, but I do want to say one thing that I think is very important.

You're the Committee that is interested in Federal -- how do you -- Relations; the Assembly for the-- Oversight, Reform, and Federal Relations Committee.

Well, one of the big problems we have is -- was pointed out by some of the people here -- marijuana is still on the Schedule I of the Federal schedule of drugs. I can administer morphine and fentanyl to patients; but I can't give them marijuana.

And from personal experience, the criticisms of marijuana -- nobody wants to give marijuana to 21-year-olds. Everybody is concerned about mental health, especially with children and everything like that. But seriously, adults -- there are many adults who are taxpaying Americans, and they want to use marijuana and they can conduct themselves in a way which is compatible with everybody's safety.

We have people using these things every day when they're driving in their car; that's a danger. We all-- Myself, I hate to admit it; I hope you--

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Careful. (laughter)

MR. BOWEN: I hope I'm out of the statute of limitations, but I used to break the law and drive up into New York and get drunk and drive home, back in the 1960s. Terrible; and I don't do that anymore.

So I'm glad that this Committee covered subjects that I didn't expect to hear. And I'm very thankful that you did that, and I think everybody needs to think long, and hard, and clear about what to do. But to use common sense and avoid the fear and pushback against the misinformation that's here, like the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* reasoning, which I hear so frequently, is a problem. But there isn't-- The studies that we need to get done can't get done, in large part because of the Schedule I thing with the Federal government.

Thank you very much for your time.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Anybody have any questions? (no response)

Well, thank you, sir.

MR. BOWEN: You're welcome. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Next would be Steven Shaiman.

S T E V E N B. S H A I M A N: Hi; my name is Steven Shaiman.

I'm a CPA; I've been a CPA in this state for close to 35 years.

I want to thank the Committee for having this hearing, and for allowing me to speak before you.

My interest, at this point, is also about an injustice -- and that is economic. And it relates to -- and this may be a little esoteric to some -- but in the Internal Revenue Code, there's a section called 280E. And basically what 280E says is, that if you are in the cannabis business -- but

not just the cannabis business; any business that's federally illegal, and this is, obviously -- then the operating costs cannot be deducted to arrive at your taxable income.

So what's happened -- and this is mainly a problem for gentlemen like them (indicates) who want to be in the dispensary business -- but it affects all -- any cannabis business. But other types -- the cultivators -- they get to use other techniques, accounting wise, that allow them to deduct a lot of their costs. But for a dispensary, the only thing you can deduct is inventory -- that's primarily the cost it is for you to buy it from the cultivator. So essentially, the cost of running your business, other than the inventory, is not deductible for Federal purposes. Which means that a cannabis dispensary could be taxed several times more than their actual income; and this is extremely problematic.

I understand, of course, that this is a New Jersey forum; so my point here is that in this Bill, that eventually gets passed, that there be a provision that states clearly that all legitimate operating business expenses of any cannabis business be allowed as a deduction, to achieve a taxable income for any -- whether it's a corporation, an LLC, or any other form.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: You mean on a statewide level, or are you talking about on a Federal--

MR. SHAIMAN: Yes, on a state.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: On a state.

MR. SHAIMAN: I mean, typically, when you file a tax return, the income from the Federal -- there are some adjustments, like, for depreciation. But generally, for the most part, your Federal taxable income is the same as your state taxable income. But in this situation, because the

way it's being taxed federally is so unjustified, because of the scheduling and all this--

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Right.

MR. SHAIMAN: --we know of; I'm saying that until that problem is corrected -- which, hopefully, it will be-- I know there's movement; Cory Booker is trying to get it changed, and others, but as of now, it isn't.

So I'm just saying, the legislation that you guys put together, I'm hoping that you can make it clear that the taxation will allow for deduction of all business expenses.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay; that's a good point.

Thank you very much for bringing it up.

MR. SHAIMAN: You're welcome.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Does anybody have a question? (no response)

Thank you, sir.

MR. SHAIMAN: You're welcome; thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Next will be Brian Staffa.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: (off mike)
Hold on; he'll be right here.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay.

Okay; while we're waiting for Brian, how about we move to Stuart Zakim?

B R I A N S T A F F A: (off mike) Sorry about that.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Is this Brian now?
Okay.

MR. STAFFA: Thank you very much, guys.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: All right, Brian.

MR. STAFFA: Thank you again, everybody, for allowing me to be here; and I appreciate you being willing to hear us.

I will not read from the paper--

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay, good.

MR. STAFFA: --I do believe that everybody has my handout, and that's really for a take home. I hope to be a resource here.

My name is Brian Staffa; I'm the Founder and Chief Strategist at BSC Group. The first gentleman, Jay Czarkowski -- he and I are very friendly competitors. There's plenty of room in this space of all of us. But you probably saw us in the back there, talking and sharing some ideas.

We're all here to be able to move the conversation forward, for both adult-use and for medical cannabis regulation. And I'm coming to this from helping eight different states come online, in some form or fashion, whether it be a cultivation operation, dispensary -- really having my hands in the nitty-gritty and helping operators get involved. Seeing some of the challenges, seeing some of the business -- the regulating -- the challenges that they've been faced with, with regulations. And I wanted to be able to share some opinions.

I'll keep it very quick, because I know that you have this; and I would love to answer some questions that you guys may have.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay.

MR. STAFFA: I will reemphasize the necessity to split license types. The question has been, you know, should we do cultivator, processing, retail? Absolutely have them split, for the reasons mentioned. People are not specialists in everything.

And please do not ban vertical integration. I wanted to clarify -- a lot of my colleagues who have been up here before you -- they've been against vertical. And I think without speaking for them, I wanted to clarify -- I think they're against *forced* vertical integration, where we're currently at now. So I just wanted to clear that up.

The number of licenses -- I do have specific recommendations on the number of licenses, and I'm basing this on other mature states. You have that -- the little box on page 2 there; I won't bore you with the numbers that are in other states. But if we're looking at, simply, for an adult-use market, the number of dispensaries required for -- per capital -- if we keep it somewhere between Colorado and Washington, where the market is not saturated, like in Oregon, I think that would be a safe bet. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 1 for every 15,000 people would put between 600 and 700 dispensaries in New Jersey.

If we were able to have, you know, a few in each of the towns that would be willing to accept them, I think that there would be plenty of areas in New Jersey for these operations. Keeping in mind that in Colorado, 70 percent of towns have banned adult-use cannabis; 70 percent have banned. If we have 30 percent of the 565-ish municipalities in Jersey, that still leaves several hundred towns that would be willing to accept them. I think that would be plenty of spaces.

I enjoy-- A couple of different pieces of Massachusetts that I think are good and bad. One of the women before me had mentioned that they had gotten it wrong in allowing the host agreements to really get out of hand; which I would agree with. But one thing that I think Massachusetts is doing correctly -- that I think we could take a page out of their book -- is to not be under the false pretense that we're going to set regulations once, and that they're going to stay forever. And the same thing with the licensed operators. They may apply for a specific tier of cultivation, and need to expand or decrease. And the best way to do that is to be looking at what's actually selling, in my opinion.

The last piece -- just so that you guys understand what it is that you have here -- I have been to three out of the four of these meetings, and I've heard quite a bit of misinformation; and I simply wanted to put forth some good, basic facts, that were as unbiased as I could possibly write them, for just a little bit of extra clarity on the processes. So that when you're questioning people, like me, or just anybody, you had a little bit more background with which to build from.

I'll leave it there; and I'd really appreciate any questions, based on the experience I have in consulting in 24 of the different -- of the 29 states that are legal. I've seen a lot that works, and a lot that doesn't.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MR. STAFFA: It would be a pleasure to answer some questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I have one.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Of that 70 percent of towns in Colorado that have banned, was that a higher number at one time; was it 80 percent? Or are towns changing their minds now, or pretty much staying the same?

MR. STAFFA: It's starting to decrease. The biggest town that sticks in my mind, that is now reconsidering whether to allow adult-use, is Colorado Springs. The reason that it's so important is because Colorado Springs is the second-largest city in all of Colorado. Basically, the town next to them, Manitou Springs, has allowed for two dispensaries; and they catch all of the flow from Colorado Springs. And the report out last year was that, in 2017, Colorado Springs lost out on \$25 million in tax revenue because of banning. So now they are seriously reconsidering; and I would imagine that there is going to be many other towns like that, but I can't speak to that specifically.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Okay; thank you.

Thank you, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: You've been all around the country; one of the issues discussed briefly today was measurement of THC impairment levels. Have you seen any states advance to the point where they're close to being able to adopt a reliable measurement?

MR. STAFFA: As it relates to consumption levels and impairment levels?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Correct.

MR. STAFFA: Not that I can speak to. That's a little above my area.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: So it's really just the Drug Recognition Evaluations.

MR. STAFFA: The DREs -- as it stands right now, to the best of my knowledge, yes. I know that there are several startup technology companies that are looking for a type of breathalyzer. I don't know that anybody's there that has any type of tangible proof that it works yet. But they're doing their best to get there.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Okay; I appreciate, it.

MR. STAFFA: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you for your appearance and testimony today.

MR. STAFFA: Thank you very much for the opportunity, guys.
(applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'm going to shift directions a little bit.

I'd like to call up Sheila Brogan.

Good afternoon, Ms. Brogan.

SHEILA BROGAN: Good afternoon.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And I understand you're opposed to something.

MS. BROGAN: I am.

So good afternoon.

Before I speak, I just want you to know that I have no business interest, nor do I receive any financial gain if recreational -- or should recreational marijuana be legalized.

I'm separating out medical versus recreational; and it is opposition to recreational that I am speaking about.

I am chairman of the Ridgewood Municipal Alliance Committee; and today I am here representing our Municipal Alliance.

I am a long-time resident of Ridgewood, a licensed social worker, mother of three, and an active volunteer in my community.

Each year we receive a grant from the Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, GCADA. And as you know, GCADA administers the State's \$10 million Alliance to Prevent Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Programs; which is the largest network of community-based, anti-drug coalitions in the nation, with thousands of stakeholders serving on nearly 400 Alliances, encompassing more than 530 municipalities throughout New Jersey.

"Municipal Alliances are established by municipal ordinance, and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth, and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey." So these are the words that GCADA uses.

So it is interesting to me that GCADA's voice has been silent on this issue of legalization; but our Alliance did not want to remain silenced.

The Ridgewood Municipal Alliance is made up of representatives from our police force, and our schools, parents, and community members. We are opposed to the legislation that would legalize recreational marijuana. And I've attached the Resolution that we -- and I won't read it, because I know your time is of an essence -- but our

Resolution is right here for you to read. And I think that the take-away from it is that marijuana is not a benign drug; and that we are concerned that it sends -- the legalization of recreational marijuana would send a confusing message on drug use to those under 21; primarily to our middle school and high school students.

And I know you've discussed that it's already there; but so is alcohol, and we try every effort we can for prevention. And actually our statistics are very good in Ridgewood, and I'm sure other Municipal Alliances could speak to their successes in their communities.

I also have attached for you the Smart Approaches to Marijuana, and *Marijuana Legalization Quick Facts*. I hope that you will look at that. There is also *Marijuana and Other Drugs: A Link We Can't Ignore*. I've also attached information on *The Costs of Marijuana Legalization to Society*, and also *Driving and Marijuana: A Dangerous Mix*. I hope you will review those.

I fear that money is driving this conversation. I think, as we look to the Governor and the amount of taxes that he hopes would come as a result of legalization, I think this is not a decision we should be making about money. We should be really looking at mental health and the wellness of our communities.

So thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Brogan, you recognize that marijuana is readily available to our community right now, yes?

MS. BROGAN: I recognize that it is being used; but I think that the fact that it is illegal does deter some of our students. And our

health curriculums in our schools are all based upon drug and alcohol abuse, and prevention, and avoidance.

So, yes, I mean, I think you can always say -- you can say that vaping, which has really grown, is very common. And you're only supposed to vape when you're 21, but kids are buying it online and vaping. So schools are responding by having--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So let me just cut -- let me just cut in right there, because I want to ask--

MS. BROGAN: Yes, but it's the reality is--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I understand; I'm going to cut you off--

MS. BROGAN: All Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --because I have a question--

MS. BROGAN: All right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --and then a follow-up question.

So our community, right now, has basically unlimited access to marijuana.

MS. BROGAN: No, I wouldn't say that -- *unlimited*.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: It's pretty close to unlimited. And I appreciate and agree, in great part, with your concern. But right now, that access -- outside the medical product channeling -- is all criminal marketplace. That's -- so to do nothing is to allow that criminal marketplace to exist. And the children who we are protecting -- trying to -- when they get a cannabis product outside the medical channels, they are getting it from, and supporting, a criminal marketplace.

MS. BROGAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So in there -- in between there is my concern; and that is, probably, what most of my legislative colleagues are wrestling with. Though I don't promote the use of alcohol, I certainly drink. I don't promote the use of cannabis, but I understand there's that balance somewhere in there. And I can't just turn my head, or turn my back on the questions that must be answered.

So I'm with you in your concern. I just don't know where I, personally, am going to land on that. And that's why I ask. The first thing we have to agree on is, it's right there in our communities, and it's not going away. And the people who are capitalizing on our children, who don't care about the access to our children -- right? -- because if they're criminal, we're not regulating their access, and their marketing, their distribution, their retail to our children. But you have to recognize that if we start regulating it, for medical or non-medical, we start to regulate it. (applause) And I don't know where we're going to land on there.

So as one community activist to another, one parent to another, I go to bed every night; I worry about how we're going to answer that question. It must be answered -- would you agree -- somehow. But doing nothing is not an option.

MS. BROGAN: Well, but there are other options that should be. And that is in the prevention work and enforcement work. And I believe that we really need to look at the message that we're sending our youth when we say that, "This is okay."

But we can agree to disagree on this. I think that legalization is not a good idea.

So thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: We can't agree to disagree, because I don't know if I disagree or agree with you yet.

MS. BROGAN: Oh, okay. Great. (laughter)

I hope you agree with me then.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I commit to nothing.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Could I just say something, Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I honestly don't think anybody up here is sitting here just thinking about the tax revenue for the State. I think what we're trying to do is get this right; and recognizing what our Chairman had said: There is an issue out there that is not going away; and how do we correct this, and how do we make this all work for everybody in our state? And I think that's what we're all thinking about.

So don't think that I'm sitting here thinking that this is going to be -- what's going to save our State of New Jersey, because it's not.

MS. BROGAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: It's something that is a real issue that we're looking into.

MS. BROGAN: Well, I'm glad to hear that. Because the coverage is more about the money aspects of it.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: It's not the money with me; I'll tell you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Chairman, well said. I don't give a hoot about the money.

MS. BROGAN: Great.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Well, with the exception -- I don't want the cartels and the criminal element to continue to profit off my community of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you.

MS. BROGAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Yes; thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just quickly -- first of all, I commend you for your involvement with the Municipal Alliances that we have across the state. They do a great job.

So would you be advocating, if there were to be legalization, a certain portion of the revenues going to our Municipal Alliances -- you know, like we have right now, from alcohol -- but to address educating the youth in our educational system about-- There could be-- First of all, it's not legal for under 21, if it were to be approved. But just so that -- there is that constant reinforcement in our educational system, "Don't do marijuana under the age of 21. There could be potentially harmful effects -- brain development, so on and so forth."

I'm assuming that if we're talking about the abuse, the misuse here--

MS. BROGAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: --you would want some type of funding to expand--

MS. BROGAN: Oh; well, you know, certainly funding is important when we look at any of these prevention programs.

Part of the problem -- there's issues with how that funding is distributed in GCADA; and the inability to really allow communities to look at the data and be more flexible, in terms of what needs to get done. So there's a whole issue there.

More money for education -- you know, we've done a wonderful job, over many years, on tobacco and the abuse of tobacco, right? So now we have vaping; and I go back to vaping because there's a huge issue now with vaping, and its accessibility, and what kids are doing. And then they're also vaping with marijuana.

So then you have -- you know, you have alcohol, and we have more binge drinking than we used to have. So there are these issues; continued education is absolutely necessary.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you.

MS. BROGAN: And so more money on that front would be great.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you.

MS. BROGAN: But I'm not sure I'm willing to trade off legalization of marijuana. So I just want to be clear on that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANCER: Thank you, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

Any other questions? (no response)

MS. BROGAN: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you very much for your inspired testimony and your presence.

MS. BROGAN: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Margaret Scarpelli.

Margaret Scarpelli.

Ms. Scarpelli, you look like you're holding a speech.

MARGARET SCARPELLI: No, I'm not holding a speech.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: All right; because I'd rather just have a dialogue with you.

MS. SCARPELLI: Right; and I--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --and you can give us your speech.

MS. SCARPELLI: You know, I've listened to all the testimony -- well, pretty much all of it, except the last part, has been pro legalization. Of course, I'm against it.

And I'm not -- I have no expert testimony here. I just came as a public citizen; I've been in New Jersey for-- I've lived in Hawthorne for 24 years, and grew up in Midland Park. So I guess you could say I'm from around here.

And my only issue is the quality of life that we've come to know here in the state. I'm not going to read from this. I was in the park a couple of weeks ago. It was one of those warm days in March, and senior citizens, babies, strollers -- and I didn't smell anything, and I'm not looking forward to the day when I will. And really, that's -- my only issue is quality of life; the one I've come to know, the one I've come to appreciate. And I don't want to see it go.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Scarpelli, that's a big concern of mine as well.

And just to let you know, this is not a meeting of experts. I did this meeting, all these meetings, for people like you. So, you know, I'm glad you're here.

MS. SCARPELLI: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So let's talk more about the quality of life, and what you're concerned will be harmed. What aspect of your quality of life, as it relates to cannabis, are you concerned with?

MS. SCARPELLI: Well, I am concerned about children walking down the street, in the morning to school, and the aroma of marijuana in the air -- them inhaling it. I am concerned about that. If it's legalized, no one will stop it; no one will stop it in the parks, the beaches, all the places we love.

New Jersey is so different than Colorado and California. Colorado -- I do have a couple of statistics. Colorado is 104 million square miles; and New Jersey is 8.7 million square miles; and California is 164 million square miles. Colorado has 5.5 million people, and we have 8.9 million. So it's pretty tight here. I don't know how you avoid it.

And so, I'm just saying we're not the same as other states.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sure; and I agree.

I also recognize the aroma of marijuana is strong, pungent, and unique; and it is not very flattering, for me. But I also recognize less and less is being smoked every day; less and less (*sic*) of it is being processed to a product, or being used in a way that you're not smelling it. I mean, from vaping -- vaping has a very small fraction of the secondary smoke, or the smell; you might not even smell it next to a person who's vaping it. If it's

put into an oil, a paste, a Blazin' Brownie, or whatever you have, you're not smelling it.

MS. SCARPELLI: I'll take your word for that. I have nothing back to--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Isn't -- from what I understand, that, you know, it will be the same as alcohol. There will be no public smoking of marijuana, just like there's no public drinking of alcoholic beverages. I'm sure that would go along those lines.

So I don't think that, you know -- unless they're doing it illegally -- smoking pot in the park, or whatever -- I mean, it would be no different than drinking illegally; that would be an offense. That would be something, definitely, you could not do.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: But at a cultivator or dispensary location -- you have some validity. There is an aroma that escapes those places of business. And what I found in Colorado when I surveyed the place -- you pull up in their parking lot. It's like a strip mall, right? There are three dispensaries -- two or three, right next to each other. How they can do business with that proximity, I don't know. Starbucks on one end, McDonald's on the other; it was a perfect little strip mall -- right? - - one to keep you up, one to put you asleep, one to feed you in between. (laughter)

And when I pulled up, I smelled the product of cannabis, and I (indicates); I made that sound. But, you know, outside that parking lot, you didn't smell it.

But a location in central Jersey had -- that dispenses and cultivates -- they had an aroma issue with their neighbors; a next door business. And they put smoke -- odor eater machines, like air filters, all throughout their place. And standing in the middle of, probably, a million dollars' worth of growing marijuana, you could barely smell the marijuana, because they just keep on filtering and filtering their air.

So I see some regulatory opportunity, as it relates to the environmental quality of life in New Jersey. And I think we're going to do a lot better job. I don't know where we're going to end, but we're going to do a lot better job when it comes to that.

MS. SCARPELLI: You're the enforcement.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Is that something that interests you?

MS. SCARPELLI: The enforcement is an issue -- how it will be regulated.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes, yes; so you and I agree on that.

MS. SCARPELLI: On that part, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: We all agree on that, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Any questions? (no response)
Okay; ma'am, thank you very much for your appearance and testimony. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up J. Burke, Women's Club, Ocean Grove, New Jersey.

J. Burke.

J. B U R K E: Hello.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Burke.

MS. BURKE: Hello.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Good afternoon.

MS. BURKE: Good afternoon. I feel as though I'm in Washington, D.C. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: No, just feel like you're in your living room, and we're here as your guests.

MS. BURKE: You know what I mean? -- the hearings.

Well, thank you.

I am an ordinary citizen; I have been an English teacher in a community college in New Jersey. I'm originally from Massachusetts. And one day we were discussing -- or it came up -- marijuana. And, "Ms. Burke, are you opposed or are you for it -- legalization?" And I said, "I'm against it." And a student said, "What? What if your mother has cancer, or your brother, or husband, or friend, or whatever. You would deny them medical marijuana?" I said, "I certainly would not," but I added, "If medical marijuana is so potent that it can take away the pain and alter the perception, what is it doing to your fresh, young brains?"

We didn't finish the discussion.

As I said, I'm nervous. And I brought some papers, because I smoked marijuana. I ran around with an academic crowd when I was in Massachusetts, and my boyfriend taught at MIT; he was an adjunct. And he used to serve it in brownies. And one day we went driving -- it was hash -- and he said, "Judy, you see those trees over there? What do they look

like to you?” And I said -- incidentally, I’m not against people who smoke marijuana; I’m trying to share my testimony -- I said, “They look like men walking.” He said, “Yes, me too.”

Now, why am I here today? Because under the influence of the very product which, grown, is similar, I went up, in Norfolk, Virginia, a wrong way exit to a highway. I can still hear the horns; I don’t know if I killed anyone; I didn’t hear ambulances after that. But I remember looking at that road -- not the *wrong way*; I didn’t register with the *wrong way* -- and I went up it.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Just for my--

MS. BURKE: Certainly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --so I can follow along with the story.

MS. BURKE: Certainly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Were you under the influence at that time?

MS. BURKE: Absolutely. I was a marijuana smoker.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Oh, okay. All right.

MS. BURKE: That’s what I’m trying-- I’m sorry. I smoked, as I said--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: So you’re totally under the influence of marijuana.

MS. BURKE: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: With anything else in it?

MS. BURKE: I had an occasional drink or two; but I was a marijuana smoker.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay, all right. So you're going up the wrong way on a--

MS. BURKE: Let's say, the Garden State, Exit 117; you know, the wrong way.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes.

MS. BURKE: Okay; I still hear the horns.

Okay; now what am I trying to say? You know, I think I'm really trying to speak for those who don't have a voice. I'll tell you what I mean. I've been silent a long time; and I have a friend, an elderly friend, older than I, in Saint Petersburg. She knows that I was -- I've been sorry for the years that, indeed, I wasted on marijuana.

Now, what do I mean? Marijuana, unlike alcohol, immediately -- I studied this on my scholarship, when I came to -- immediately, sir, Honorable Daniels, goes to all of the receptors in the brain. And you can find this too; this is from the National Institute of Drug Abuse, our very own. And one of those receptors is the hippocampus; and that receptor is -- it happened to me -- learning and memory.

So sure, I felt great; whee! One night we discussed love at a party -- the whole night. What's the meaning of love?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You're out of time. If you could--

MS. BURKE: Am I talking too loud?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: No, you're talking perfectly. You're out of time, so I'm going to--

MS. BURKE: Honestly? Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Yes, right?

MS. BURKE: All right; okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: We're having a good time here, but can you summarize your message to the Committee?

MS. BURKE: I sure can, I sure can. Yes, I can; because I think people have to know this.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Quick summary.

MS. BURKE: Yes, good; a quick summary.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Because you're out of time.

MS. BURKE: The state of Colorado -- fatalities on the road have gone up 145 percent. Now, you're smiling; I don't know why. Because I think New Jersey, a state I've come to love, is going to have blood on its hands. And I will stop with this. Check it-- I guess you're thinking this is fake news. I hear good things about Colorado, but I think that the fatalities have gone up. You're welcome to look at this; it's reported by the *Denver Post*--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay, thank you, Ms. Burke.

MS. BURKE: Okay; and the very last thing. I must say this.

I read all the time in the paper about people who are leaving their babies, in the summer, in the car. A friend in St. Petersburg informed me -- because they reported it -- the parent was on marijuana.

Okay; I think we'll have blood on our hands, and I'm requesting that we have a public debate a little longer.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Ms. Burke.

MS. BURKE: Yes, certainly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: We appreciate your appearance and your testimony. (applause)

I will note to the Committee that when I went out to Colorado, I drove, probably, three hours from Denver out to Breckenridge, or past Breckenridge. And they had the digital highway warning signs; and that was in February. And they warned that there were over 60 highway deaths already that year. But when I slowed down and read the complete message, that was all from distracted driving.

MS. BURKE: Well, you're welcome to--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: It was all texting and driving, and had nothing to do with anything -- drinking or anything else. That was their message; texting and driving was on the top of their message board.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Chairman, could I ask one question?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Ms. Burke, are you from -- did I hear correctly -- Ocean Grove?

MS. BURKE: Yes, sir; that's where I live.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: I'm from Neptune.

MS. BURKE: I just saw your name.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thanks for coming all this way.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay; the Committee is going to take a short, 20-minute break. We'll convene 20 minutes from now.

(committee recesses at 1:15 p.m.)

(committee reconvenes at 2 p.m.)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to thank everybody for their patience.

The Committee took a short lunch break because of traditional hunger, and not the munchies. (laughter)

That one was a bit on the nose.

But we're going to-- Back in order.

So we have to end at 3 p.m., and we have a lot of people who still want to testify. We want to hear everybody, but we simply are running out of time.

So the people I call up to testify, I have to modify -- make two changes. You'll only have three minutes, and there will not be any questions. I'm making that rule so we hear as many people as possible.

And instead of us asking questions now -- if you filled out the cards, we have your contact information; and for members of the Committee or Legislature, who want to speak with you further, we will have your contact information. And I think that's accommodating you even more than not having these two rules.

So again, I'm going to call you up; you have three minutes. I'm going to keep to it very strict, and there will not be any questions or answers when you come up to testify.

That being said, I'd like to call up Stuart Zakim.

STUART ZAKIM: Thanks; I'll use my three minutes wisely.

This is the third of your hearings I've been to, so congratulations. I really think they've been informative, and I applaud what you're doing.

I'm here in two ways: I have my own public relations firm that specializes in the cannabis industry; it's called Bridge Strategic Communications. And I am also the communications head of a national group, called the Marijuana Business Association, the MJBA. We believe in education and networking. We're not lobbyists; we really put people together and explain the industry to each of them. We're national; we started five years ago in Seattle, and we've rolled east as things have happened on the East Coast

We've also been very much involved with the New Jersey Cannabis Symposiums, the third of which was just held the other night in Princeton. We handled the communications for it, and we had almost a thousand people at the first one, in Newark, at NJ PAC; we had close to 350 at the second one; and then we had 200 the other night in Princeton.

There is an enormous appetite in this state for learning about how to get involved in the industry; and that's a service we provide. So as you guys are helping educate all the constituents here, we're trying to educate those who are interested in getting into the business and help them make that happen.

So thank you for this; I just want to go on the record saying that.

And I wish, to someone else's point, that you would do this on a lot of other topics. But there's nothing more important to us than cannabis.

So thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you. (applause)

Sally Jane Gellert.

SALLY JANE GELLERT: (off mike) Yes.

Hi; I am a resident of Woodcliff Lake. I am here on my own behalf.

I am in support of legalization; I am in support of expunging records. I think people who have done things that are now legal should not be carrying a penalty over in a new world.

I am-- I have my wrong document up; okay.

I just -- I think we have a serious racial disparity in our arrests; in many areas, it's 3 to 5 percent (*sic*) in marijuana arrests, and attention must be paid. We need to fix that; we need to invest in the communities that have been so severely hurt by the war on drugs.

The Drug Policy Alliance has -- I've heard a couple of their presentations -- they have analyzed a lot of the various states' practices; they have a piece of model legislation that you should be looking at, I think, as well as the legislation you have on the books -- the bills in consideration.

I think we're being very optimistic in expecting a lot of money from this for the next year's budget, because there's a lot that goes into this. You have to take the time, do it right.

We need to get rid of, as much as we can, the black market and get a good controlled, regulated market, similar, as people have said, to the alcohol market. And it won't be -- it will be a mixed message for this generation of kids, probably; but, you know, five years down the road, it's the same message as alcohol -- you're an adult, do it responsibly; you're a minor, not yet, hold off.

We need lots of money for that education. The comment from Colorado, about the first-time education -- that makes a lot of sense.

So, okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you very much.

(applause)

Angelic Colon.

ANGELIC COLON: (off mike) Oh, I'm just (indiscernible) here.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Well, I just wanted to say good afternoon anyway; how about that? (laughter)

All right.

Pascale Vazquez.

PASCAL VAZQUEZ: (off mike) Hello.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You're going to speak for her?

MS. VAZQUEZ: I'm going to speak for us both.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I like it. (laughter); that's a good friend.

MS. VAZQUEZ: How are you? Thank you for having me here.

First, I'd like to address-- My name is Pascale Vazquez, and I would like to address-- I know this is very important, trying to figure out exactly how to maintain and uphold, if it does become legalized, so there wouldn't be any controversy, as far as the community; and then you have law enforcement.

But I really want to address the fact that we-- Marijuana has been -- what? -- we can say from, in the 1940s, the scientists proved marijuana was not connected to any violence or insanity.

A bipartisan commission recommended to the President -- well, then-President Nixon -- to decriminalize marijuana. In our history, we -- marijuana-- Humans have been cropping marijuana for as back as 8,000 years ago. In 440 B.C.E., there was the ancient tradition of cannabis steam baths. And in America, it was legalized for many years; available and used for over-the-counter medicine.

It wasn't until, in 1937, when Congress passed mandatory sentencing laws. And this was all from Nixon's zero-tolerance on drugs; and all in the name of bullying his political enemies and minorities.

I'm just worried, as far as-- It was never -- it was legal; I want to know why we're fighting so much now to make it legal again off of racist, old laws that were put in place.

It frustrates me when I hear about the black market; even though it is a concern. But it frustrates me, because everything that's put here is cloned or is tampered with; and it doesn't specifically have to be drugs or anything other than that.

When they were talking about the children -- the doctor spoke about children under 21. I think that marijuana -- there shouldn't be any access to any person under the age of 25 because of brain functions and cognitive functions that interfere with their lives.

But I think we should focus more on trying to-- And just legalize it, because it was legal before. In the war on drugs, they stopped it, and now--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Vazquez, you're out of time.

MS. VAZQUEZ: Okay. But thank you very much; I appreciate speaking.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you.

MS. VAZQUEZ: Thank you, and enjoy your day. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Sanjay Chaudhari; am I doing all right?

SANJAY R. CHAUDHARI: Pretty good. (laughter)

Hello there; thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

My name is Sanjay Chaudhari; you were pretty close. I'm a CUMMA patient. I'm a horticulturist and environmentalist; I'm a former Rutgers Certified Master Gardener; I'm a father.

And as a patient, one concern that I've had is that -- I'm concerned with the quality of the cannabis that's being produced by the dispensaries right now. The production methods that they're using are hydroponic, predominantly, which creates a lot of potential wastewater. They're not using an organic method; they're using ionic nutrients to feed the plants. And I'm not sure if their wastewater is being managed or not -- if they're being required to remediate it.

As a former Rutgers Certified Master Gardener, even when we apply a lawn fertilizer, it's illegal to do it after a certain time of year because of the potential runoff. It can go into our water, streams; into our watersheds, and pollute our groundwater. So I think it needs to be managed and looked at -- the environmental impact; because a lot of it, with hydroponic production, they can grow it fast and cheap, which is a problem with production if it's purely done for commercial reasons.

And as a patient, I know that some of the most beneficial medicinal strains are very low-yielding. So even though these are set up as nonprofits, it's not in any sort of capitalistic business plan; it's not profitable for them to grow something that's very beneficial to patients -- because it doesn't yield as much -- when everything's about yield and weight.

So I'm hoping that you guys can be on the side of letting patients have home grow. I know a lot of patients can't afford the medication, even if they don't have an issue with the quality of it. It can be -- for two ounces, which someone's prescribed -- \$1,000 a month, which is quite a bit of money for a lot of people who are on disability, especially.

Some of the places are using a soilless production method, which involves more of a potting soil. But they also use a similar non-organic synthetic fertilizer; a chemical salt to fertilize the plants. It's a little bit better than hydroponics, but it still results in -- they need to throw away all the soil, and it's probably being dumped somewhere. Eventually the same issue -- it has so much nutrients in it, that it could be, then, polluting groundwater and streams.

No one is currently producing organically. And if new facilities were required to, or promoted, encouraged to be organic in their production methods, they could reuse the same soil and they would not have any detrimental runoff. So everything would be good for the environment. They wouldn't have any type of issues that way, and it would produce a healthier flower for patients, too. So I think that would be something nice to consider.

So I think my time is almost up, right?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: It's up.

MR. CHAUDHARI: Am I up?

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Yes.

MR. CHAUDHARI: Sorry; could I say one more thing?

There is sort of a paradigm with tomatoes, that if someone -- you can go to the grocery store and get a tomato; it's not going to taste the same as a tomato that you grow, or you get from a farmer's market; an heirloom tomato. And I think it would be great for patients to be able to have a way to have that high quality product -- just for themselves, not something to sell or anything.

Thank you very much; sorry. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Mr. Chaudhari, stick around; there might be questions later, after people speak, okay?

MR. CHAUDHARI: (off mike) Sure; thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Gale Bonker.

GALE BONKER: Hi, everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story and advocate for the legalization of cannabis today.

I'm advocating that all New Jersey politicians support legalizing, taxing, and regulating cannabis for adults.

This issue has been very important to me for a long time, but it became even more personal for me when I became part of one of the over 23,000 people arrested for possession. Since then, I've suffered from severe anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and financial hardship.

And, like thousands of others with similar stories, I was denied my dignity and made to feel like a criminal for something that nine other

states, including two I used to live in -- Massachusetts and California -- have already legalized.

So despite the setback, I must move forward -- make lemonade out of lemons, as they say -- and implore all of you to legalize the responsible adult use of cannabis for adults. And not only for me, but especially for those who our criminal justice system disproportionately affects -- as many folks have mentioned before -- people of color, immigrants, and low-income people.

For every white person like me, in our state, who gets arrested for possession, as many folks have mentioned, there are around three black people who are also arrested. And I'm disgusted by the fact that my black peers often face harsher sentences and higher fines than myself and my white peers. And additionally, some of us who do not have ample income are often put in extreme financial hardship due to the thousands of dollars that an arrest can cost someone, between fines and lawyer fees.

Others of us are at risk of losing public housing, educational financial aid, jobs, immigrant statuses or green cards, and more, all for being in possession of a plant that has been proven to have significant medical benefits; and is much safer than other completely legal substances, such as tobacco and alcohol.

Cannabis should not be a scheduled drug, especially a Schedule I drug, because it does not share the high abuse potential associated with other Schedule I substances, such as heroin; or even other legal recreational substances.

Cannabis' dependence liability is similar to that of caffeine, which is 7 percent; and is far lower than the dependence liability of alcohol, which is 15 percent, and tobacco, which is 32 percent.

Cannabis possesses an acceptable and known safety profile, and has no known risk of lethal overdose. And the acute toxicity of cannabis is also very low.

Others in this room, earlier, expressed concern about marijuana being a gateway drug. Marijuana is not a gateway drug; but rather many consider it to be an exit substance because it allows users to wean away from other more harmful substances, such as opioids.

So thank you, again; and please vote in favor of legalizing, taxing, and regulating the responsible adult use of cannabis in New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Ms. Bonker.
(applause)

Michael Ryan.

It's good to see you again.

MICHAEL RYAN: Same here.

And I really appreciate the opportunity to, one more time, try to get my story across.

Before this, I was tagging my advocacy to expungement. And although that's at the root of it, what I'm really seeking is inclusion.

I spent 18 years in prison for distributing marijuana. I didn't kill anyone; I didn't carry a gun; I wasn't part of a cartel. It was 18 years; and I always thought that was wrong. But now that we're considering allowing people to do -- or to violate the same exact laws that I went to

prison for 18 years for, now I know it's wrong -- that that's the way the laws were set up.

Anyway, I have -- I want to talk about how this affects me personally. I'm a partner in a mechanical contracting-engineering company. It's been an energy company that has operated in this state since 1937. It started out as a coal company; evolved to oil, service. And we've -- my partners and I have taken it to this very cool place, where we're very involved with solar and geothermal sustainable technologies. These are things that would really match up well with the cannabis industry.

I feel like when I go -- when I try to present myself to somebody who has an opportunity to receive a license and be their contractor, I carry this stigma with me that-- And I hear it warned at all times, "Make sure you -- check the background of everyone you're involved with." And I don't think I have an opportunity to get into the market because of that. I don't have any delusions of being licensed to produce marijuana; but I want to be able to -- I want to operate in the industry.

I just -- I think it's very important that New Jersey really considers their expungements; how they deal with expungement. Because, for one thing, New York and Pennsylvania are watching New Jersey closely. This is a model that is going to be emulated in many other states. And I really hope that you can forgive the people who have been punished, or have operated in this industry before it was legal.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MR. RYAN: I really appreciate the opportunity. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Stavros Christoudias
(indicating pronunciation). (no response)

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: (off mike) It's
Stavros Christoudias (indicating pronunciation) -- I think is his name.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I was close. (laughter)

All right; I don't think he's here any longer.

Tracy Goldman; Tracy Goldman.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: (off mike)
She's (indiscernible).

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay.

T R A C Y M c H U G H G O L D M A N: (off mike) I'm
(indiscernible), just answering some questions (indiscernible).

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Don't forget your charger.
(laughter)

MS. GOLDMAN: (off mike) I won't (indiscernible).

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Take your time.

MS. GOLDMAN: (off mike) When I go rushing, that's when I
start to stumble.

Hi, guys; thank you very much for having me. Again, thank
you for everything that you're doing.

I'm just here today just to answer a couple of questions that we
-- that came up, back in April.

I was able to answer the questions that we had, in reference to--
Number one was, home scale cultivation on a small-scale level. You have all
the backup documentation I already submitted; and I'm sorry I wasn't -- I
didn't have enough time to give each one of your guys a copy, but I was

able to answer the home scale cultivation. The training company, Duane Morris -- they do webinars that you can learn; they have a web series that we can train people on small-scale cultivation.

There's also a company called *THC Safety*; they are based out of Boulder, but they'll come here and they'll do small-scale training. I brought this up in reference to our veterans, to be able to give them an extra way to help them be able to obtain their medication.

One of the questions that you had given me was, what about the smell; what about the cost of electricity. I was also able to -- in your packet you'll see there's a company called *Erganics*, and they actually provide home-- They're ventilation systems for home growing, specifically made for attics and basements. So that way, you don't end up with the odor -- that was something that we had mentioned before. They're made for small areas; they're easily accessible for the disabled, being that they're on wheels. And they run on 110 electrical grids, so you don't have to worry about upgrading there.

Then there's a company called *Palmer Construction*; they have one of the main dispensaries -- I'm sorry; main cultivation, as far as the environment is concerned. They have a controlled medical cannabis growing facility; it's in Waterfall, PA. And this runs off of solar power, and they actually use -- they reuse the water, the rainwater, for harvesting and recycling purposes.

So I think those were really the main things. The only other thing was the rescheduling, of course, because that affects so many where jobs are concerned. Because, I mean, you can go apply for a job; but the second you get to that point where you go get drug tested, and you're on

marijuana, you can no longer get the job. And that's something that needs to change, because opioids shouldn't be our only option to be able to be employed. And if we can change this to allow people to be able to go and get jobs, then that will help us in Social Security and in many other ways too.

Those were some of the questions that we had last time; and I was just glad to be able to have answers. I made sure that there is a primary package that I gave earlier; but everybody will get an individual -- I'll shoot it all off to you tonight. I'm sorry, I was in Trenton all day yesterday; so I've been busy.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Ms. Goldman.
And it's good to see you again.

MS. GOLDMAN: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you very much.

MS. GOLDMAN: And thank you for your time. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: The next person is Jared Mancinelli.

J A R E D I. M A N C I N E L L I, Esq.: Hello, my name is Jared Mancinelli. I'm an attorney and researcher here in New Jersey.

I write appeals -- I take appeals from the Public Defender's Office; and I'm also the Chief Content Officer of cannabislawdigest.com. We are a website that is cataloguing all the civil cannabis -- all the civil judicial decisions regarding the cannabis industry, nationwide, in all 50 states.

But I'm not here in any official capacity today; I'm here as a concerned citizen, wishing to speak about the topic of expungement. Specifically, the expungement provisions that exist in the Bills that are

currently before the State Legislature would require individuals, who have been convicted of cannabis-related crimes, to apply for expungement of those crimes from their records.

Personally, I believe this is unfair, especially to many people who are poor and underprivileged, because it would require them to spend their own time and money on attorneys, on courthouse visits, and things of that nature. I think a better and broader approach would be some sort of amnesty for past convictions for marijuana possession and other nonviolent crimes related to the substance.

I recognize that this sounds like a somewhat radical proposal; however, I think that such an approach could potentially be more cost-effective; not only for defendants who have been convicted, but also for the State itself. Instead of having to individually process all these expungements, it could be, at least in theory, done in one fell swoop.

Now, the issue of how to do this in a manner consistent with the State Constitution is ultimately going to be in the hands of the Office of Legislative Services. And as someone who interned with the Office of Legislative Services during my time in grad school, at the Bloustein School at Rutgers, you have some fine legal minds working in that organization. I worked for a man named Charlie Buono, who's a brilliant, brilliant attorney; I learned a great deal from him.

And, you know, I already gave you my contact information; I am willing to speak to anyone from OLS, or from either house of the Legislature, on this issue, if we could possibly move this forward.

I believe that the State of New Jersey could be a national leader in forgiving cannabis offenses. Canada is already considering an amnesty

proposal as part of its legalization measure; and I think that New Jersey could do something, could accomplish something, that even bigger states -- like California, Oregon, and Massachusetts -- have not yet accomplished. (applause)

I think we could be a national leader in advancing the cause of social justice in this state and the cause of criminal justice reform in this state.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MR. MANCINELLI: Thank you very much for your time. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up Jennifer Salomon; Jennifer Salomon, from *JenniCannAdventures*. That name is very *can-tastic*. (laughter)

JENNIFER R. SALOMON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and the rest of the Committee.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I was just trying to be *clever-juana*. (laughter)

MS. SALOMON: I will get to that.

I do happen to own an ancillary cannabis company, based out of Newark, New Jersey. We operate in the ancillary space, offering transformative travel opportunities that revolve around cannabis. I borrowed from the yoga thing.

The only thing that my business has in common with what I want to point out here is our goal of sustainability. I am so happy that

people finally mentioned the environmental elements surrounding this, because it is important. And we--

I only have three minutes; so a couple more numbers is that -- we have 19 days until hurricane season, and we have 130 miles of coastline. So if we are not considering the environmental impacts of future legislation, then we are doing ourselves a disservice as a state.

I have been a Bergen County and New Jersey resident for the past six years, and very proud to be. I'm currently only operating my business in Alaska, D.C., and Maine, because of the allowance for recreational legal cannabis there.

I mean, Alaska is the most least-densely populated state in the nation, and we are the most-densely populated state; did I say that right? And they've been able to use their tax revenue to offset the regulatory process, and they're reinvesting back in the public health element of it. And I think that instead of referencing California and Colorado, we need to be looking at more states, like Alaska and Massachusetts, because they are more in line with where we are. I hesitate to compare us to California and Colorado; I really want stand on our own.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Excuse me.

MS. SALOMON: Yes?

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Can you shut that off, sir?
(indicating audience member)

I'm going to credit you a minute. (laughter)

MS. SALOMON: Oh, cool.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I apologize.

MS. SALOMON: I'll speak even faster.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Go ahead.

MS. SALOMON: So I am grateful for the opportunity.

I think that all regulations do need to speak to the environmental elements of it, especially the wastewater. However, cannabis has been shown to be 11 times more effective than other plants in absorbing free carbon dioxide. So that is a consideration, as well, we do need to think about, for the environmental elements of this.

The expungement of previous personal -- previous possession records -- I am in support of. I am also in support of further research; because we had a doctor up here speaking to a study that spoke about people with psychotic breaks. I retired from a 16-year career as a paramedic; and I watched the transition of the opiate crisis happen, firsthand. No one ever called 9-1-1 for smoking marijuana; they sat in their basement, and watched cartoons, and ate Cheetos. (laughter and applause)

I did a lot of CPR on people who overdosed on opiates. I want to point out that it is an exit drug; I want to point out that we have opiates legal, we have alcohol legal. From that point of view, it is ridiculous, to me, that we wouldn't consider cannabis.

I thank you so much for your consideration.

I am available for any other questions anybody might have, or to connect.

And I wish you the best of luck as we move forward with responsible and sustainable regulations and legislation. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOUGHTALING: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Salomon, since I credited you an extra minute--

MS. SALOMON: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --why don't you tell us about your business so we can put it all in context?

MS. SALOMON: My business started when I got -- when I retired from my paramedic career, I went into a cybersecurity startup job.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: (timer beeps) Ignore that.

MS. SALOMON: That's okay.

I was working in D.C. often, and I was trying to participate in cannabis culture. And I found a lot of challenges because of the rules; and there's no retail allowance in D.C., as you're well aware. So there's a really creative gifting economy that happens.

I started my business based on that. Those challenges are great for my business model, honestly. The more regulations, the better.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: What is your business?

MS. SALOMON: I run transformative travel retreats, akin to other spiritual retreats, yoga retreats; where I take groups of people, and we are in residential places. And they have a wellness weekend, or a longer period of time, that is all-inclusive. And they can participate in a legal cannabis culture. We partner with local craft cannabis producers so we can highlight those folks as well. My people in D.C. enjoy D.C. cannabis; my people in Alaska enjoy Alaska cannabis and Alaska-specific things. With the focus on sustainability, respectability, and legal use, it's turning out to be a really cool endeavor.

And I would love to bring it home. You know, I'm a Jersey resident. My signature retreat is in D.C.; it's a three-hour Acela ride. I want to do it in Asbury.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Okay; thank you very much.

(applause)

MS. SALOMON: Thank you all so much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Peter Corallo.

P E T E R J. C O R A L L O: Good afternoon.

Thank you for letting me speak.

I am from Monmouth County; I am looking to develop a dispensary in Monmouth County.

And for that, and the help I need to ask about that, is increase of licenses available for medical -- initially medical; we want to go after that initially. We spent some considerable time, over the past couple of years, with a dear friend of ours, who's a vet. And we saw the struggle he had obtaining his medicine. We know there's many more like him who need access, and just can't get it; and can't get it in the right quantity, the right dosage, etc. And I think education is key to all this.

I just want to mention that, contrary to what other people have said today, about the effect on the brain and all that -- developmentally and so forth. Okay, I've been a user since I was 15 years old; I'm a CPA, as I mentioned. I handle companies with up to \$100 million in sales volume; I can't do that if my brain is deformed (laughter) or off-kilter, if you will.

Our son is Type 1 diabetic; I'm just going to mention that, for the record, just because the medical component of this is huge. And we, just by getting more educated ourselves, have learned now that there's a form of THC that is actually conducive to glucose inhibitors; and that's a remarkable advancement, among many others that are out there.

The reason I mention this is that he also, you know, has been a user for quite a consistent time. And there were doubts as to whether he was going to finish high school, let alone college. Well, he did both; he has a degree from the biggest music school in the world, Berklee College of Music; I'm proud to say that. He's very successful in his career. And we feel that the number of patients in Monmouth County who are utilizing, unfortunately, opioids right now, and over-the-counter drugs that don't work, really can benefit phenomenally from the legalization of cannabis.

Not to mention the tax revenue that can be derived through the counties that do participate; and the State as well. I'm not going to get into the taxation of it, because that's a whole different topic, I feel. But just, in general, it being passed to grant us that ability to do that, and bring more licensing to the table-- I think the talk I've heard is that there are 40 right now, that are being proposed. That is far too few. We have a huge state, with a lot of participants, and a lot of people who need access to this. And we'd like to, sort of, make that happen if we could.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you.

MR. CORALLO: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Jo Anne Zito; Jo Anne Zito.

J O A N N E Z I T O: Hello, Committee; thanks for this opportunity to show support for cannabis reform in New Jersey.

I've been a long-time victim of prohibition in the state, and especially in Bergen County. Prohibition is a war on people and their rights, their individual rights; and war is also a racket. It's also a war that I believe we have lost, given that arrests continue and proliferation continues.

Cannabis prohibition also destroys lives, and cannabis saves lives.

Given the amount of time, I have some names that I'm just going to list off; and if I could ask you to research their stories so you can learn about some of the detriments of cannabis arrests.

Bryce Masters was a 17-year-old who was tased to death by a police officer who -- he was violent and biased towards cannabis use. And thankfully, he was revived; but the officer probably would not have been punished if the victim's father was not also a police officer and had resources -- to FBI to investigate.

[Ramarley Graham](#) -- he was a teenager who was shot in New York City in his bathroom when police thought that his cannabis, that he was dumping in the toilet, was a gun.

Jawara Tosh (*sic*) is Peter Tosh's son; he was brutally beaten in Bergen County Jail where he was serving time for a cannabis arrest while traveling through New Jersey. He's still in a coma from a year ago.

The war on cannabis is a racist, sexist, and classist war that was partially done by the DuPont family (*sic*). Robert DuPont -- that was in 1937 -- Robert DuPont was the second Drug Czar in 1973, and he also makes his money off of drug testing kits and facilities to this day, and he advocates for their use widely.

And in Bergen County-- On the boarder of Bergen and Passaic County, there is a Superfund site that is owned by DuPont that is still not cleaned up after decades, while they have held back cannabis as medicine.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Can you sum it up with one sentence?

MS. ZITO: It also supports rape culture by roadside strip searches. And there is a story of Anna, in Brooklyn, who was taken because they smelled cannabis. She was detained in a van, where she was raped by police officers. And--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Ms. Zito. We appreciate--

MS. ZITO: And I do have a lot of-- Being a cannabis advocate in New Jersey, on the Coalition for Medical Marijuana-New Jersey, I do have other points that I'd like to make, as far as how legalization should go. But--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Submit that to OLS--

MS. ZITO: I will.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --and they will distribute it.

MS. ZITO: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you very much.

MS. ZITO: And you did say something about -- you have our contact information, so that we would--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: If you filled out one of these sheets (indicates)--

MS. ZITO: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: --we have what you gave us.

MS. ZITO: Okay; thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you. (applause)

Nicole Payne.

Good afternoon, Ms. Payne.

NICOLE PAYNE: Hi; good afternoon.

My name is Nicole Payne, and I'm a resident of Hackensack and a resident of New Jersey for all of my life.

I am here today because I support the legalization of cannabis for responsible adult use.

I believe the haunting stigmatism created about cannabis has clouded not only our vision, but also our minds. The anti-marijuana propaganda of the early part of this century -- which was imbued by racism and, eventually, McCarthyism -- is still at the core of this discussion.

These archaic sentiments of yesteryear are permeating our current reality and creating a potential negative impact on our future. These myths and misguided information have ushered in a new era of *Reefer Madness*-laden type rhetoric.

This moment is not only a part of New Jersey's history, but our nation's, as it is pregnant with purpose and possibility. It is poised to give birth to a new way of living, industry, and economic platform that is beneficial for the people and can be led by the people.

This is why it is up to legislators and the citizens to collaborate and create legislation that reflects sound research, ensures equity, and is used as a conduit for enriching the lives of the people in their communities.

There is a miseducation to the masses in the propaganda that cannabis is completely harmful. There are a number of medical benefits from this plant, as I'm sure you've heard today. Responsible, adult marijuana use should be regulated, similarly to alcohol and tobacco. Government should not legislate the choice of the people.

I understand the concerns surrounding further legalization for the adult-use market. Those issues are, indeed, real; and I'm sure that those

have been highlighted today. But learning from other states to devise legislation can preemptively address those issues through programming and education.

Also it is -- we need to examine statistics from all resources, not just those that suit a particular argument. I caution that we have to ensure fidelity of those reports that we tout, because a lot of them do not demonstrate causality; which means that marijuana actually has an effect on different areas.

Huffington Post blogger Russ Belville and *FactCheck.org's* Vanessa Schipani -- they have also highlighted these in articles. Terms such as *marijuana-related* or *tested positive for marijuana* do not necessarily prove that marijuana was a cause of the accident. The term *marijuana-related* entails any time marijuana shows up in a toxicology report.

Also in the AAA report, conducted in 2016 by Washington state, it also adds that many marijuana-positive drivers also had alcohol and other drugs in their systems; which, in some cases, likely contributed more significantly to the crash than THC.

But does anybody know about the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey that was conducted by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Department of Education, and the Department of Human Services, as well as the University of Colorado? Those statistics show that, since 2012, with the recreational use of marijuana becoming legal, that in 2011, 22 percent of teens used; but in 2013 and 2015, that was at 20 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

Also the national survey, in 2015, shows that, as a nation, 21.7 percent of the students use marijuana, as opposed to 21.2.

I have concerns about this Bill. And we tout the racial components and making sure that we are also included; but a lot of concern from many in my community is that this may be a ploy, and rightfully so. We need to make sure that we use the leverage of the Black and the Latino Caucuses to make sure that people are not cut out, and that it is not a ploy from white patriarchal business interests that will further create blight in our communities. (applause)

So if we do not get in-- Nationally, another statistic -- and I'm trying to go as fast as possible -- even though we are underrepresented in this industry as black and minority women, we also are leading the nation in certain positions. There are 5.3 percent of female minority executives in the cannabis industry, where it's only 4.5 percent for all U.S. businesses. I'm saying this because this could propel women and people of color into the business.

So I urge this Committee, as well as other Committees, to make sure we leverage the playing field; that we make sure that Jim Crow remains inanimate, and this is not just a ploy to allow other people to come into our communities.

I thank you for your time; I tried to speak as quickly as possible.

Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Ms. Payne.

MS. PAYNE: I have more, but I got all jumbled up.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I understand.

MS. PAYNE: I'm sorry.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And you were speaking faster than you could breathe; I know. (laughter)

I also share your concern about the patriarchal ploy, and the gravity that this big money has. And I worry about the opportunity for women and minorities. I've been saying it all day, for months and months. It's a big concern of mine.

MS. PAYNE: Because it could be used as a ticket just to get in, and--

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: If you hear me yelling on camera, you'll know what I'll be yelling about, right?

MS. PAYNE: Okay; and I'll be willing to work with any of you guys to form that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: You've got it. Thank you.

MS. PAYNE: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Patricia Kibby.

PATRICIA KIBBY: Hi; good afternoon.

I have four points I'd like to make, and I'll try to make them as quickly as possible.

I lost my sister to alcoholism; she overdosed on alcohol, had a seizure, and passed away. She was a heavy drinker for many years. It runs in my family, and I've had my own issues with it as well.

What I'd like to say is, I began smoking cannabis again, after a lapse from when I was a kid, in October. And since then, I don't drink alcohol anymore. I don't want to drink alcohol; I don't have the drive to drink alcohol anymore. (applause)

I actually have shingles right now, and I'm sorry to bring it into the room. That's why I was sitting, like, all the way back there. But I got up out of my bed, sick with this, because this is so important -- that it's not only about the business; it's about the people. So that's one point.

Make more licenses available; and not have a high minimum cash requirement. I've been told the cash requirement is anywhere from \$750,000 to up to \$1 million to get started. This is from the CannaBusiness Association of New Jersey. As a normal New Jersey resident for my entire life, there's no way I'm going to be able to raise that kind of money. I'm just a normal person; I don't know how to get investors. I will do my best to do so; I have a plan to start my own retail dispensary in New Jersey. But I don't know how I'm going to raise that kind of money, because I'm just a normal person with a normal, 9 to 5 job, and living here.

My third point is that I recently saw my physician; I have anxiety problems since my daughter was born, which you can appreciate why that would be. But I applied for medical marijuana for myself for anxiety at bedtime so I can sleep, because my mind races with trying to apply for medical marijuana, and work, and everything else.

And I was denied medical marijuana myself, because they told me I had to max out my current anxiety medication; and then I had to take another medication for sleeping. So instead of, like, being able to smoke a joint to go to bed, I was told to max out my existing pharmaceutical medication, add another pharmaceutical medication; and, if that wasn't sufficient, they would send me to a psychiatrist first.

So this medical piece of it -- I'm sure some people are getting relief from it, but it sure isn't me, you know? So I'd appreciate it, to jump

off this medical -- because now you're at the discretion of a doctor and his thing. And I don't think this doctor's thing is every doctor's thing, but it sure wasn't my thing.

And then my last thing is -- I've always said this, and I said this to my daughter, too. My daughter ended up being a heroin addict. She's clean now; she's clean now for three-plus years. I had to send her to Florida and the rehab system down there; but I'd just like to make this point quickly.

The current black market of marijuana is what put my daughter in contact with drug dealers who sell heroin. She would not know the drug dealer who sold heroin if she had the ability to access marijuana in a safer environment. So because she met these people, they became her friends, and she became a heroin addict; when, if she could just access marijuana, that never would have happened.

So that's my four points.

Thank you so much for hearing me.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you; thank you, Ms. Kibby.

MS. KIBBY: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'd like to call up our last person for the meeting, Stacey Gregg.

Good afternoon, Ms. Gregg.

S T A C E Y G R E G G: Good afternoon, again.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Congratulations; you are the last person of this series of meetings that we're having. So this is a very important opportunity for you; we're all watching. Don't get nervous.

(laughter) You'll never get this opportunity again; it means *everything*. So don't be nervous.

MS. GREGG: All right, Joe.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: And now you only have a minute. (laughter)

MS. GREGG: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'm only kidding.

MS. GREGG: You restart that clock when I get done introducing myself and the town.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Don't be nervous.

MS. GREGG: Give me a second.

Okay; Stacey Gregg, from Rockaway.

I made it to your meeting at Rowan University; and I had the great honor of being the last person at that time; that's where we met. (laughter)

I'm not going to go over my story regarding my husband and his having to be diagnosed *terminal* before the doctor said, "Oh, you qualify for medicine." So I'll just throw that out there; I know you have it already on the record regarding my feelings about doctors being the determinant whether or not-- And the last woman put it together eloquently regarding her feelings about the doctor being the determinant factor with medical marijuana.

So I just want to put that out there, with agreement, with what she had to say.

Without going over all of the testimony given by the last few speakers, I haven't heard anyone here making points that I disagreed with; and I strongly -- my topic, Jared Manson (*sic*) covered--

MR. MANCINELLI: (off mike) Mancinelli.

MS. GREGG: Mancinelli.

MR. MANCINELLI: Yes.

MS. GREGG: Thank you, Jared -- covered very well.

I came about expungement; I came about-- I did not bring my *Stop Racism* signs today, but I'm advocate for various organizations. And we've had, under this presidency, a lot of racism happening in our country right now.

And New Jersey can be a leader regarding expungement, and making people's lives whole, and correcting some of the damage done over the last 50 years with this lumping on of a record to somebody, when they're trying to go to college, or further themselves with a college education; or a job application; or for those who may have wanted to become a teacher, or a police officer, or join the military -- without having to rely upon that person's, who is interviewing them, opinions regarding marijuana's use as recreational.

I know, personally, as a child, with my siblings -- and again, you know, with my friends' children, and with my children -- it causes a lot of inner strife and everything when you're worried about them being in places where there is marijuana use; where they can have it end up on their record. And my being a white woman in a state -- it's not going to affect my child like it is somebody else who is not white. I do have that white privilege. For those who don't understand *white privilege* who are listening to this

today, I recommend that you get some books and read up on it. You may not realize what it is and how you use it every day if you are white. That's not to be offensive; but we have a problem. It's a racial problem and an economic problem, regarding who gets this on their records.

So I really believe strongly that we need to expunge -- and I like everything that was recommended. And I feel strongly about Jared's testimony. It hit to the point; it's something that we really-- It's not-- (timer beeps)

I'll sum it up.

I don't think it would be fair to make people go to added expense and hiring of attorneys. It's something that should be done on an amnesty basis; and sooner, than later.

And I'm going to add one sentence. This was very difficult to find today; there was no signage, and I did not hear anything about these hearings anywhere, other than on Facebook, at the very last moment.

Thank you for having us, though; and thank you for listening today. (applause)

Thank you, everybody; I really appreciate it.

I look forward to your report.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you; and it's good to see you again.

MS. GREGG: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: I'm going to note, for the record: Casey Trimble is in favor, no need to testify; Madeline Trimble is in favor, no need to testify; Flory Donefsky, in favor, no need to testify; and Angelic Colon, in favor, no need to testify.

Everybody -- ladies, and gentlemen thank you so much for coming out and participating. (applause)

I think this was a valuable dialogue, and I'm sure we're going to continue the dialogue in one fashion or another. And hopefully, the State will do it right the first time.

Thank you. (applause)

(MEETING CONCLUDED)