

Senate Transportation Committee – Feb. 13, 2023 - SF73 Marijuana legalization

Thank you for taking my testimony today.

My first concern regarding SF73 relates to Metro Transit Light Rail lines, like the Green Line, that have in the past been the site of a “party” atmosphere; evidence and observation of drug use on trains; increased crime including assaults, shootings and, as a result, reduced ridership due to crime.

Even though SF73 outlines offenses and limits to cannabis use; it appears to provide little, if any, resources, or provisions to enforce usage limits and criminal guidelines like an increased law enforcement presence and the resources needed to provide monitoring and enforcement of the prohibition of use in public spaces.

This is a problem – the bill sets up a Substance Use Disorder Advisory Council thus admitting that substance abuse is expected. Yet provisions for enforcement are incomplete.

Next, SF73 authorizes an “Oral Fluid Preliminary Testing” – Pilot Project. When I think of a “pilot project” it is one that is limited and done BEFORE implementation on a wide scale. This one expires in July of 2025 when I assume, if passed, that commercialization will be continuing to start up and expand. Why wouldn’t the Commissioner of Public Safety begin a pilot project in selected/volunteer municipalities before commercialization begins? Afterall, people are using NOW.

Lastly, as I have stated in other committees (which has been reported by professionals in published news articles): people are not educated about cannabis, including the medical profession regarding its effects, risks, and long-term impacts.

As with public and professional education, it should be done first, before legalization (i.e., take one year to do public service announcements). It is just another example of how backwards this bill (and the concept of normalizing a dangerous drug) is to everyday people, like me, who work hard, follow the law, pay taxes and understand common sense. It saddens and disappoints me.

Do people really think that commercialization of THC will make it SAFE once regulated? It will feed an addiction culture and an addiction industry. Regulation would only make circumstances around drug commercialization appear ‘less dangerous’. I urge you to vote NO to marijuana legalization. Linda Stanton