



924 17th Ave SE Apt. 303
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414

Sensible policies, safer communities.

Representative Tina Liebling, Chair
Health Finance and Policy Committee
477 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: House File 1413 (Edelson)
Medical cannabis program modifications

Dear Chair Liebling and Members of the HHS Policy Committee,

On behalf of Sensible Change Minnesota, and in support of House File 1413, we first want to thank Representative Edelson for pursuing this piece of legislation to improve the medical cannabis program. Sensible Change Minnesota is a non-profit that believes our communities are safer when we create sensible drug policies. We have focused much of our efforts over the past three years on improving the medical cannabis program and are fully supportive of HF 1413.

As a limited expansion of the current Peacetime Emergency Order 20-26, the proposed author's amendment will change provisions related to Registered Designated Caregivers. It will allow any patient in need of a caregiver to have one and each caregiver to serve up to six patient households. Our sister organization, Sensible Minnesota, has partnered patients with volunteer caregivers throughout the pandemic. This has especially helped those with mobility issues, recovering from surgery, or at high-risk for viral infection. We also envision this provision helping patients in more remote areas of the state.

HF1413 is the companion bill to SF1179, which received a unanimous vote in the Senate HHS Committee and is headed to the Senate Floor with additional provisions adding raw cannabis flower as an allowable delivery method, adding opiate addiction as a qualifying condition, and removing the Health Commissioner's authority to add new conditions. In the hearing in the HHS Committee, Chair Benson indicated it is her intent to create a "mini medical cannabis omnibus" bill.

While we understand the House may approach these important fixes to the medical cannabis program differently, we urge House members to work with the Senate members to pass this legislation. We are not thrilled with the trade-off of removing the Commissioner's authority to add new conditions but, as patient advocates who have worked hard to add conditions such as PTSD, autism, Alzheimer's disease, and chronic pain through the administrative process, we believe the vast majority of patients are covered by the currently approved conditions and see this provision as an acceptable trade-off for the affordability and accessibility fixes now contained in SF1179.

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We are hopeful the work this year will drastically improve Minnesota's medical cannabis program and urge you to support HF1413. Please work with the Senate to get all the medical cannabis program modifications passed and signed by the Governor in 2021.

Respectfully,



Maren Schroeder
Policy Director, Sensible Change Minnesota