

Delegates Wilson and Atterbeary and Committee members
Thank you for this chance to voice my thoughts

My name is Dr. Leigh Vinocur, I am a board-certified emergency physician with one of the first master's degree in the country in medical cannabis science and therapeutics from the University of Maryland's School of Pharmacy. I founded a medical cannabis consulting practice in 2016 with a focus on medical cannabis education for adult and pediatric patients with serious chronic conditions recommending evidence-based condition specific treatment plans. I also am a medical cannabis industry consultant and advisor developing educational training programs and policies with the most up-to-date evidence-based medical cannabis science and therapeutics for both the healthcare and the cannabis industry.

I am a member of the Society of Cannabis Clinicians, Doctors for Cannabis Regulation and Americans for Safe Access, which is the largest and oldest advocacy group for cannabis patients. And I am here to speak on behalf of the medical cannabis patients in Maryland, for many in Maryland these medications have been their lifesavers.

With respect to adult-use, prior to our state's referendum passage, I had written an [op-ed piece in the Hearst publication](#), Greenstate.com which does outline why cannabis is no more dangerous for adults than any other legal drug such as tobacco and alcohol, but I want to make sure our medical patients are not lost in the shuffle. They need to be a priority in this new legislation especially if the medical patients and their dispensaries are to be lumped together with adult-use through this new commission. They are very different populations.

First and foremost, safety of all cannabis products is critical. Even in the adult-use space, processors must practice cGMP practices with 3rd party verification ensuring quality, safety & accountability. I do believe there should be limits on THC concentrations and potencies in adult use products and their per serving sizes, all with very clear labeling for the public to be able to understand. All products should have certificates of analysis showing they are free from contaminants, like heavy metals, mold, and bacteria as well as clear labeling of all cannabinoids and other compounds present including any residual solvents.

As both a cannabis and emergency physician, public safety is my number one priority. First looking to states like CO that was the first to legalize adult-use, they found a [drop in registered medical patients](#). Often after legalization in states, patients will continue to self-medicate and that can be a problem. A [recent study](#) found that over 55% of patients using adult-use dispensaries are relying on dispensary staff for advice on what product to use for their medical conditions while less than 3% of them got input from their physicians or clinicians. And while non-clinicians working in the industry should never be giving medical advice, they all need to have a basic foundational understanding of medical cannabis science and be able to send patients to appropriate medical professionals when necessary. That is why medical cannabis science and therapeutics education needs to be a cornerstone of any legislation.

And then of course any adult-use legislation needs to ensure protections of our minors, we need adequate traffic safety laws and safe-work environment regulations. All things that our medical laws have strived to do these last 6 years, need to continue in earnest.

Thank you for your time and attention.