



MINNESOTA

Rep. Kelly Moller, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety Finance and Policy  
509 State Office Building  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

March 2, 2023

Dear Chair Moller,

I am writing as the CEO of Vireo Health of Minnesota, one of the two medical cannabis licensees. I also lead Vireo's social equity initiatives, which include hosting and coordinating our expungement clinics that help Minnesotans repair the harmful damage caused by prior cannabis convictions.

I want to thank Rep. Stephenson for the thought and care put into the expungement provisions in HF 100. Minor cannabis convictions continue to show up for decades on background checks for jobs, housing, college admissions, business and student loans and other vital life activities. Nationwide, 90% of cannabis charges are for non-violent possession of cannabis. According to the ACLU, between 2000 and 2010 cannabis arrests accounted for more than half of all drug arrests nationwide, and 88% of those were for simple cannabis possession. We have heard dozens of stories like these at each of our expungement clinics from individuals who continue to face challenging barriers as they try to move forward and improve their lives.

For the past eight years, our company has been dedicated to serving Minnesota's medical cannabis patients with safe and quality medicines. We have also maintained an active presence in our communities as stewards of positive change.

The STAR TRIBUNE and other local news outlets have reported about our partnerships with the Mitchell Hamline School of Law's Reentry Clinic and The Legal Revolution - a movement to transform the law by those most impacted by it. Our meaningful partnerships are a driving force for our successful expungement and clemency efforts, which have helped hundreds of Minnesotans. I am also a member of The Great Rise's restorative justice task force, another local organization working to improve HF 100 with the goal of eliminating racial and socioeconomic disparities in the adult-use cannabis economy that this bill seeks to create.

We are a deeply-rooted Minnesota company with a robust track record of being part of the solution to cannabis problems for the safety, health and wellness of our Minnesota patients, team members, and local communities. And we are just getting started in our efforts to help right the wrongs that have been caused in our communities by the failed war on drugs.

We are hopeful that the state will welcome our support, experience, and knowledge to help establish a compassionate cannabis program that all Minnesotans can be proud of. Let's be stewards together, and build a program that supports individuals who are justice impaired due to simple, non-violent cannabis convictions by providing opportunities for them to participate in the state's adult use cannabis program.

Sincerely,

Amber Shimpa  
CEO, Vireo Health of Minnesota

