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Senate Committee Chairman
The Honorable Carlos Mariani
Chairman, Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Finance and Policy
Minnesota House of Representatives
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Chairman:

My name is John Baucum, Political Director of Republicans Against Marijuana Prohibition (RAMP), a national political caucus within the GOP based in Houston, Texas. We have many affiliated state chapters across the country. Thank you for holding a hearing on H.F. 1355, a bill to right size the penalties for possession of small amounts of cannabis concentrate. The disparity of penalties between minor possession of cannabis flower and cannabis concentrates are shocking, and risks creating many thousands of new felons out of regular Minnesotans simply choosing to use cannabis in a different form.

While possession of cannabis flower has been decriminalized for some time in Minnesota, punishable by a fine-only petty misdemeanor, the possession of any amount of cannabis concentrate is a felony with devastating, lifelong consequences that will strongly affect ability for educational, employment, and many other opportunities in that person's life.

The text of H.F. 1355 is comprehensive and contains many other crucial fixes and updates to the current statutes related to loss of driver's license privileges for simple petty misdemeanor possession of cannabis, allows restorative justice through expungement of records and restoration of 2nd Amendment rights for individuals convicted as felons for possession of small amounts of cannabis concentrate.

RAMP believes that marijuana prohibition is fundamentally opposed to the core Republican principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility, and individual liberty. The founder of RAMP is 92-year-old, and 35-year grassroots Republican, Ann Lee. She frequently asks why politicians pay homage to bad law when they have the power to right the wrongs of a failed policy. This bill is a great step forward to create an appropriate and proportional penalty for possessing small amounts of cannabis concentrates, which have become very popular over the last few years. I urge you to quickly vote H.F. 1355 out of committee and continue to support it through the legislative process until it is signed into law.

Sincerely and respectfully,

John Baucum
Political Director, Republicans Against Marijuana Prohibition
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