

Peace,

My name is Marcus Marcus, I am a family man, writer, organizer, and social entrepreneur from North Minneapolis. I am the director of the Minnesota Campaign for Full Legalization and a co-founder of the Minnesota Cannabis College. For the past 7 years, I have studied the unjust history of prohibition and the emergence of the legal Cannabis industry. I have also been a Cannabis consumer for 22 years because this healing plant makes me feel better, enriching my life with healing peace of mind, creative meditations, harmonious fellowship, holistic pain relief and the enhancement of my joy in countless life experiences. I have never been a criminal, but I have been a victim of prohibition. I am one of hundreds of adult Cannabis consumers in Minnesota who are tired of waiting for prohibitionist legislators to wake up to the understanding that prohibition is the problem, not Cannabis.

We are grateful to have dozens of legislators in the House finally championing #FullLegalization legislation because lives are at stake. These unjust laws are used as a corrupting tool by the police for probable cause to harass, search, arrest, seize property and disenfranchise thousands of Minnesotans annually. Cannabis is a healing plant, not a dangerous killer drug. The most dangerous thing about Cannabis is getting caught with it because you can lose your freedom, lose your job, lose your housing, and more. Prohibition has failed to stop the existing billion-dollar illicit market in Minnesota. Prohibition adds no value to public safety, wastes law enforcement resources, and full legalization is simply much safer than senseless criminalization. The imperatives for full legalization include respecting personal freedom, increasing public safety, improving public health, creating economic development, and advancing social justice and racial equity.

We are here today to support H.F. 600 because of the smart provisions in the bill that help establish a small business friendly, craft Cannabis industry with low barriers to entry, potentially a couple thousand business opportunities and more than 20,000 jobs from the ten license types established in Article 1, including the microbusiness license, which is the only segment of the proposed legal market that allows for full vertical integration. The Minnesota model of Full Legalization has the potential of being the national standard because most of the 15 Cannabis free states have unfortunately implemented "Big Marijuana" friendly, prohibition lite models. The multiple grant programs created in Article 4 will help aspiring entrepreneurs with a lack of industry experience and limited wealth to gain the knowledge, skills and capital needed to access the emerging legal Cannabis industry. The illicit market, AKA the legacy Cannabis market feeds a lot of people with low to moderate incomes. We believe those with actual entrepreneurial skills should be supported in transitioning to the emerging legal market. Racial justice, or social equity if you will, is never achieved by accident. The Office of Social Equity can do plenty of good by intentionally helping the Cannabis Management Board build a diverse industry in not only employment, but ownership.

Please pass H.F. 600 to begin repairing the destruction in our communities caused the failed prohibition of Cannabis.

Thank you!