

To the Honorable committee members

Classic case of indoctrination

My name is Chad Hewitt a registered republican from St. Paul, Mn. In the past I was strongly against cannabis until my life changed for the WORSE. Why, because that was the way I was brought up and educated about cannabis, let me explain. I started out in young adulthood with a metro area police explorer group learning about Law Enforcement life. Then it was on to a very active metro county Sheriff's office reserve unit (not your typical reserve unit in the day), where I spent approximately 7 years. I also worked for 3 years at the former private prison in western Mn and 6 years at a state-run facility as well. Besides the political BS and gossiping I enjoyed the work.

During these years I was having neck pain that would go in to my shoulder then down the arm. At times my hand would twitch uncontrollably and at other times I would drop things. It felt like someone had their thumb pressed in my neck/shoulder. There is pain and numbness in my hands. I tried the usual over the counter pain meds and rubs with no success. My family doctor prescribed physical therapy, baclofen (muscle relaxants), Vicodin. Then I went to a Nero surgeon where I was told I had degenerate disc disease and had a disc bulging. As my wife is crying, he explained I needed surgery to fuse c-4/c-5 together and to be very careful because if I got hit wrong way whether it be playing with my son or an assault at work; could cause permeant damage. A week later I had surgery. After the surgery things really didn't get better. My doctor continued to prescribe Vicodin, tramadol, morphine, Tylenol 3, Percocet, methadone, oxycontin, Neurontin. And I became physically addicted to them. As time went on my tolerance went up and had to take more. I would have nausea/vomiting when I took them. When I didn't take the opioids, I would get sick as hell. Like the flu but 10 times worse. I would have been grateful to get the flu. I missed family outings, hunting, fishing; shit that a Minnesotan like. It also affected my work. Opioids have placed a big x so far in my life's history.

Then came medical cannabis! Cannabis has been nothing more then a live saver for me and thousands of people just like me. I no longer over use my pain meds, and actually have dramatically decreased the use and will continue to do so with cannabis. I can actually get up do things with the family now. As time went on, I learned a ton about hemp/cannabis. Minnesota has a huge opportunity here, right now! to lead the nation in hemp/cannabis industry and I want to be part of it. I owe it to the cannabis plant; it probably saved my live. People from the farming industry, to the young adult blowing glass, the middle-aged sheet metal worker to make rolling trays, and the auto mechanic replacing a bumper or quarter panel made from hemp; will all benefit from legalization. With approx. 50,000 consumable and non-consumable products that can come from hemp/cannabis there is chance we can help hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans like myself. Should it be a free for all, absolutely not. What has been proposed is very sensible. As to the DUI issue, take in serious consideration tolerance level. I have seen a lot of alcoholics function just fine and have pbts' come back with .16 to .20 plus. Same thing with THC and opioids. Do we really want to pass up this opportunity? PS. Notice to politician. Americans are sick and tired of the crap going on in the capitols and in D.C. Thank you for your time and I really hope this gets read.