



Sensible policies, safer communities.

March 21, 2022

Representative Frank Hornstein, Chair
Transportation Finance and Policy Committee
479 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: House File 1355 (Gomez)
Cannabis decriminalization expansion

Dear Chair Hornstein and members of the Transportation Finance and Policy Committee,

I write today on behalf of Sensible Change Minnesota, in support of House File 1355. Sensible Change Minnesota is a non-profit that believes our communities are safer when we create sensible drug policies. While we have spent much of our time working on medical cannabis issues, HF1355 is legislation we wholeheartedly support.

HF1355 is an important piece of legislation to update Minnesota's cannabis laws. Throughout the country, there are ongoing discussions about reforming laws, Minnesota is known as a state that has decriminalized cannabis – a fact that is only partially true. We have heard countless patients and consumers facing felony charges for possession of a cannabis "mixture" – something they can purchase easily in the illicit market or from another state, such as South Dakota or Illinois. Many don't even know that these "mixtures," or non-flower products, are a felony to possess, because we often talk about Minnesota being a decriminalized state.

This bill is not full legalization – nor does it legalize the purchase, sale, or possession of cannabis products. It simply mitigates the harm of criminal and collateral consequences for the personal possession of certain cannabis products.

The collateral consequences of violating even our small amount petty misdemeanor law directly impact individual liberties, including the ability to own and possess a firearm. The driver's license revocation piece is especially important for those who do not live where there is public transit, as a revocation impacts their ability to get to their workplace, and even the grocery store. Oftentimes, this forces people to drive with a revoked driver's

license, which can lead to further offenses for driving after revocation.

These laws HF1355 seeks to amend are antiquated, unnecessary, and harmful to Minnesotans. It is time to bring Minnesota's cannabis laws into the 21st Century.

Respectfully,



Maren Schroeder
Policy Director, Sensible Change Minnesota