



Sensible policies, safer communities.

Representative Carlos Mariani, Chair
Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform 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 Mariani and Members of the Public Safety 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. With cannabis legalization happening throughout the country, and 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 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.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maren Schroeder", written in a cursive style.

Maren Schroeder
Policy Director, Sensible Change Minnesota