

Name: Josh Maslowski

Background: U of Minnesota, St. Louis Park resident, Minnesota business owner

Position: Support

RE: HF600

In 2017 my mother-in-law was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and traditional treatments offered little hope. She was given 15 months to live. We immediately looked into "alternative" solutions and cannabis was at the top of the list. After a negative experience with the Minnesota Medical program, we did what many other families have had to do and take the risk of traveling to a western state to find the right product at a reasonable cost. My mother in-law used cannabis multiple times every day and slept through each night and had a very high quality of life living with stage 4 cancer. She lived 23 months or 50% longer than projected and used cannabis as her primary treatment.

This experience coupled with educating myself on the history and the science of cannabis fueled the motivation to launch a company. With the legalization of hemp in 2018, we mortgaged our house to launch in the CBD industry. We branded ourselves "Stigma" after learning how little people around us knew about cannabis as well as a desire to normalize cannabis as an option for many different ailments.

In 2019, we opened up our retail showroom in Minneapolis so we could help educate the community. At the same time, we launched the Minnesota Hemp Association where we saw a high level of interest from hundreds of farmers and small businesses ready to expand into a new market. Many of these small businesses are ready to make the transition into cannabis after investing in their own infrastructure to ensure we have a supply chain to support growth in the new market.

With thousands of customers served and 3 years of sales history, we project a legal cannabis industry would increase our small, family owned CBD business from thousands to millions of dollars and for our Minnesota based company.

Lastly, corporate cannabis is making significant progress every year (similar to the Walmart or Amazon effect) and we feel strongly that waiting longer to legalize will make it more difficult for local businesses to compete and create a sustainable economy that benefits the most Minnesotans possible while starting to address the social injustices prohibition has created over the last few decades. Please vote to advance HF600.