

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee—my name is ShaunAnne Tangney; I am a retired college professor and I live in Minot. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am here to recommend a do pass vote on HB 1420.

Currently, 68% of Americans support the legalization of marijuana for recreational adult use.

To date, fifteen states and three territories have legalized marijuana for recreational adult use.

Marijuana is safe for responsible adult use, it is widely available and commonly used, and it's not going anywhere anytime soon. As such, its production and distribution should be regulated and controlled, not left to the illegal market.

There are three clear opportunities for the state of North Dakota in legalizing marijuana for adult use.

## **I. Unburden Law Enforcement**

**Legalization has not corresponded with increased crime rates.**

Virtually all crime associated with marijuana is a direct result of its prohibition, not its legalization. Multiple studies, the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, and the anecdotal evidence of countless law enforcement personnel and agencies, show that legalizing marijuana reduces crime by displacing black markets and illicit distributors.

## **II. Generate Tax Revenue**

**The sale of marijuana for adult recreational use has generated significant tax revenue in states where it has been legalized.**

Tax revenue data from 2019:

Massachusetts: \$6.7 million

Alaska: \$22.1 million

Nevada: \$99.2 million

Oregon: \$102.1 million

Colorado: \$302.4 million

Washington: \$395.5 million

California: \$629.3 million

- Alaska sends half of its revenue to its general fund and half to programs aimed at reducing repeat criminal offences.
- California's revenue pays for administrative costs associated with marijuana legalization, and then uses excess funds for programs related to drug use, including economic development, academic studies, and youth programs.
- Colorado's revenue is dedicated to education programs.
- Massachusetts distributes its revenue to various public safety programs.
- Nevada's revenue is sent to education programs and its rainy-day fund.
- Oregon dedicates its revenue to education programs, drug prevention and treatment programs, and transfers to local governments.
- Washington dedicates its revenues to health care programs.

### III. Promote Consumer Safety and Allow for State Regulation

**This is a new industry, and we have the opportunity and the responsibility to create sensible and reasonable regulations.** State and local governments can and should create broad rules covering advertising, labeling, testing, serving sizes, additives, permissible financial interests, production caps, licensing classes, etc.

Marijuana businesses are overall good partners with government and law enforcement and advocate for strong and sensible regulations because they are needed in order to establish and maintain a legitimate marijuana industry.

Furthermore, it is, I think, an opportune moment for the state of North Dakota to legalize the recreational adult use of marijuana by legislative process rather than voter referendum. I support the initiative of the deliberative body that is the North Dakota State Legislature to craft clear, concise, efficient, and sensible regulations of an industry that can bring our state economic, law enforcement, and consumer safety benefit.

In short, I urge a do pass on HB 1420 because legalization of marijuana for adult recreational use:

Unburdens law enforcement

Generates tax revenue

Promotes consumer safety, and allows for safe and sane state regulation of a burgeoning and profitable industry

I'm happy to answer any questions you might have for me.

Hearing none, I thank you again for your time.