

Dear Representatives,

My name is Matthew Falco, I live in and am a hopeful Tier 1 Cannabis Manufacturing applicant in Bennington, VT.

It has been brought to my attention that S.278 is now in front of your committee. Please amend the bill before sending back to the senate by:

1. Rescinding Rule 2.6.1(c), which currently forces tier 1 manufacturing applicants into a zoning catch 22 by requiring dedicated commercial kitchen space, which is ruining the residential character of the "home occupancy" license and presenting as a de facto prohibition for tier 1 manufacturing in the very residences for which it was designed. Rule 2.4.4(e) already imposes food safety standards onto cannabis manufacturers. So 2.6.1(c) protects nobody and kills a license category. This MUST BE RECTIFIED or small businesses will suffer.
2. Bringing the proposed consumption lounges into compliance with VT DOH by removing language allowing dispensary owners to sell food to the public.
3. Increasing the medical cannabis possession limit to twice the new proposed recreational limit.
4. Permitting cannabis lounges to have views, outdoor smoking areas, and allow "patrons" to bring their own home-grown cannabis into these establishments for personal consumption. Otherwise lounges exclude the home-growing community.
5. Expanding social equity qualifications to include anyone with cannabis convictions still on their record. The restrictions that NO OTHER substances were present at the qualifying event AND that the defendant was sentenced to incarceration (vs a sentence of "time served") are unreasonably restrictive. Most "cannabis ONLY" arrests have already been expunged or sealed, so they could not serve an applicant in any meaningful way. My cannabis arrests didn't result in EXTRA prison time upon sentencing, but they still ruined my employability, so why shouldn't I qualify for social equity? Taking a plea deal for cannabis possession in exchange for a sentence of time served should automatically qualify an applicant. Yet it didn't even though cannabis was the whole reason (probable cause) for the arrest!

CCB has not been logical in all of their proposed rule changes. Somebody should be put in charge of finding conflicts BEFORE new laws are layered upon old laws, YEAR AFTER YEAR AFTER YEAR. I volunteer as tribute!

Sincerely,
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