

## TESTIMONY OF DONALD MORSE, HUMAN COLLECTIVE

Chair Greenlick, members of the House Health Care Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I am one of the volunteers who operate the Human Collective in Portland. Human Collective was founded three years ago this month as one of the first facilities to offer area OMMP members safe access to medicine. Since its inception it has sought to provide medicine in a safe and responsible manner consistent with the OMMP.

Human Collective exists to meet the growing demand of patients who cannot find growers and who cannot or do not wish to grow for themselves. I was prepared to present this committee with over 50 patients who could each testify as to the unique circumstances that make obtaining medicine at a medical marijuana facility necessary or desirable for them. In the interest of expediency, I was asked to make their case for them.

For over 15 years Oregon has allowed medical marijuana for those who qualify however, it has yet to establish a safe & regulated system for patients to access the medicine. Once a patient has registered with the OHA OMMP they are left to their own means unlike a patient who needs oxycodin or vicoden who would only have to go to their local pharmacy. I believe that in the beginning it was thought that those wishing to use medical marijuana would have no problem growing it or finding someone to grow it for them. That is not the case today.

The reasons are many. Patients have jobs and families and don't have the time. Some live in apartments, retirement homes, hospices, assisted living facilities, section 8 housing, or some other circumstance that prohibits their own garden even if they wanted to grow. Some don't have a green thumb while others lack the mobility or strength to do so. And for some they simply have no more desire to grow their own medicine than they would to raise a chicken for tonight's dinner.

Those who do not grow for themselves try to find someone to grow for them but finding a grower is not an easy thing to do. Most patients do not know a grower or have someone willing to grow for them. The law as written requires patients to forge relationships with people they may not know in an effort to have access to medicine. For many this is a scary and troublesome process but even more so for elderly patients.

We have an ever increasing elderly population choosing medical marijuana in place of more traditional medicines. These patients represent the majority of those who have no idea how to grow it for themselves and no way to find a grower to access it. Their options are to shop the black market or to access one of the safe access points that exist today to meet their needs.

There can be little doubt as to the legality, risk and potential harm patients face when accessing medicine on the black market. And the more socially responsible medical marijuana facilities that exist do so in a gray area of the OMMP that puts patients and

providers at the mercy of the interpretation of the law by local law enforcement. Oregonians registered as patients, who take the appropriate steps to acquire their registration, deserve safe access, and HB 3460 does just that.

The voice of the patients I am representing here today, one being my wife, implore you to vote yes on HB 3460. My wife is not a criminal for using medical marijuana, I am not a criminal for providing safe access to medical marijuana to her and others and this bill assures us that patients and their providers can work together to provide safe access.