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HB2706 - Proponent

I would like to thank the committee for allowing this hearing on such an important decision for the future of our state. My name is Dustin Hothan, and I own and operate “CBD of Lawrence” in Lawrence, KS. I graduated from the University of Kansas in 2008 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. I’ve been a practicing pharmacist now for almost 14 years. July of 2018 is when I opened CBD of Lawrence, and have been serving the Lawrence community ever since. I currently have 3 employees that work the store, along with my wife and I. Although I do still work as a pharmacist, my family depends on our business to support our family of 6.

Despite what some would claim about cannabis or hemp-derived products, I consider this business a part of the healthcare community. I have had the pleasure of hearing countless testimonies over these last 4+ years from patients who have not only benefited from hemp-derived cannabinoid products, but have received life-changing effects from them. These products help treat the relatively healthy patient with occasional insomnia issues, to the cancer-stricken patient who is searching for a way to feel comfortable as they battle their disease. Patient testimonies are wonderful, but we also have so much more than anecdotal evidence of these products' efficacy. There are studies being done all over the world and in university research settings showing the potential these products have for disease states such as arthritis, pain management, insomnia, Parkinson’s Disease, seizure disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, and so much more. For years, the country has been searching for a way to help combat the opioid epidemic. How do we get patients off of extremely potent narcotics and decrease their dependency on these dangerous drugs? Part of the answer has been in front of us this entire time. I have seen patients wean off of their narcotics for pain management. I’ve seen patients stop all of their benzodiazepines for anxiety. I’ve seen patients reduce their antidepressant medications, or completely stop them, by using these products. The best part of all of this, and a big reason I became so interested in hemp-derived products, is the safety profile. It is rare to find such an effective treatment with such an outstanding safety profile. There are so many companies in the United States that are producing high quality (almost pharmaceutical grade), clean, and consistent cannabinoid products. Done

correctly, there really is no argument against the safety and efficacy of hemp-derived products.

All the potential health benefits aside, my guess is that there are hundreds of small businesses in Kansas selling these products. Not only has this industry provided so many opportunities for people such as myself to start a small business, but it provides our state with much needed sales' tax revenue. Delta-8 THC products have become the majority of my current business sales. Roughly 60-80% of my monthly sales are Delta-8 products. If you take that away, there is an extremely high probability that I, and hundreds of other small businesses in this state, go out of business. To be very clear, the market takeover of Delta-8 products over standalone CBD products is not due to the desire of everyone to get "high". Although Delta-8 can produce similar psychoactive effects a of Delta-9 THC, these products became popular because they are truly HELPING people. My parents use them nightly for insomnia. I've had people with chronic pain FINALLY find something that helps them get through the day, and improve their quality of life.

There is no doubt in my mind that we would be doing a MAJOR disservice to the people of Kansas should this bill not pass. It is crucial that we continue to progress with hemp-derived cannabinoid products. Having access to ALL parts of the plant, and extracts thereof, is also crucial to creating the most effective products possible.

I want to thank the committee for providing an opportunity to provide written testimony in regards to HB2706. Please keep Kansas advancing on this topic and do what's right for the people of our state, and the small business owners providing much needed jobs and tax revenue for our communities. I hope you can support HB2706 and pass out of this committee favorably.

Sincerely,

Dustin Hothan