



The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

I wish to thank members of the House Committee on Commerce and Gaming for holding a hearing on this matter and considering my testimony.

My name is Carly Wolf, State Policies Coordinator with The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) – a Washington, DC based advocacy organization, advocating on behalf of the responsible consumer in favor of evidence-based marijuana policy reform.

I am providing testimony today in favor of the advancement of House Bill 1019, which provides adults the legal option to cultivate limited quantities of cannabis in their home for their own personal use. NORML believes that adults should have this legal option as an alternative to solely purchasing cannabis from a licensed retail outlet.

The inclusion of legislative provisions permitting the non-commercial personal cultivation of cannabis serves as leverage to assure that the product available at retail outlets is high quality, safe, and affordable. Further, many consumers prefer specific strains of the cannabis plant. Permitting consumers the option to produce these specific strains at home assures that they will have an uninterrupted and cost-effective supply of cannabis that is best suited to their own particular interests. It would also prevent those who do not live within a reasonable distance of a retail outlet, or those who may not be able to afford cannabis available at retail outlets, from purchasing from the illicit market.

Passage of this legislation would comport Washington law with those of the other states that have enacted policies regulating the adult use of marijuana -- 13 out of 15 of which no longer criminalize adults who grow limited quantities of cannabis in private. None of these jurisdictions have ever repealed their home-grow laws, and these regulations have not created any tangible public safety risk.

Finally, permitting home cultivation would comport Washington's existing cannabis laws in line with the state's alcohol regulations. Washington citizens can brew their own beer and make their own wine for personal consumption, and it is consistent with this policy to similarly permit personal cultivation of cannabis.

For these reasons, I urge members of the Committee to support HB 1019, the right of adults to cultivate cannabis for personal use.