

House Finance

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HB25-1209 Marijuana Regulation Streamline

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Chris Rogers Against themselves</p>	<p>March 3, 2025</p> <p>Greetings honorable chairperson and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 1209. My name is Chris Rogers, and I'm a board-certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist who practices at one of Colorado's the largest inpatient psychiatric facilities. My team and I treat the sickest kids in the worst mental health crises, and HB1209, if passed, would lead to more kids in crisis in my hospital.</p> <p>As a clinician who has had a front row seat to the experiment of cannabis legalization in Colorado and how it has impacted a generation of young people, I can tell you that this bill is a step in the wrong direction. We are already overwhelmed with an epidemic depressed, anxious and suicidal kids many of whom even at age 11yo are already struggling with cannabis abuse. This bill would overturn some of the sensible regulations that were put into place in House Bill 1317 which has produced at least some appreciable gains in the health of kids in Colorado. While we still see far too much cannabis use and addiction amongst middle and high schoolers, at least the incidence of acute psychosis has diminished somewhat since passing HB 1317 in 2021. Limiting how much cannabis products one can buy at any given time is a reasonable protection from diversion to an illegal market that targets kids. Being sure that regulatory agencies can adequately track cannabis products and who is selling them is also a reasonable protection that this bill intends to whittle away at.</p> <p>Child Psychiatrists in many other states that are legalizing cannabis have looked at Colorado's initial porous cannabis regulations as alarming and irresponsible; however, the gains made with HB 1317 were seen nationally as a step in the right direction towards prioritizing the health of children over the profits of industry. House Bill 1209 squarely looks to tip the scales back in favor of industry profits with no appreciable benefit for kids and families in Colorado. The cannabis industry has already seen 15 billion dollars in sales since recreational sales went into effect, but at times it seems this lucrative industry based on an addictive chemical will never be satisfied. It is up to policy makers such as yourselves to be sure we keep guardrails in place, not create loopholes for bad actors and disreputable business practices.</p> <p>I appreciate your time and apologize for not being able to testify in person. All the families that I serve, including 100's who have already fallen prey to today's highly addictive products and unscrupulous advertising practices, hope that they can count on you to make the right call and say no to House Bill 1209 and yes to a healthy future of sensibly regulated cannabis in Colorado. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or further needs if I could be of any assistance to the committee.</p>

	<p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Chris Rogers, MD</p> <p>Christopher.Rogers@HCAhealthone.com</p>
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