

Dear committee members:

HB 68 like so many bills I read is riddled with unconstitutionality and is full of statutes that would violate many of our rights. The people retain the right to life, liberty, and property. The right to life includes the right to work and do what is necessary to make a living for oneself or family, as long as the process of doing that doesn't infringe upon another persons rights. The right to liberty is the right to freely do as one wishes, as long as such actions don't infringe on another's rights. The right to property is the right to own, manage, and use one's property for any purpose one wishes, as long as such action does not infringe on another's rights.

This bill would set up a very restricted licensing system for this industry. A license by definition is permission by competent authority do something that would otherwise be illegal. Very simply put: This industry is not illegal in Montana, and it was the people, not government, who were the competent authority that made it so.

One very large flaw that I see in this bill is that it favors very large corporate type companies and would destroy the small business people of Montana.

Also, if passed, it seems to me that this industry would be the only business in Montana that the government would limit the number of clients and hence the amount of money a person could earn. Where is the constitutional authority for that?

I have seen people in this industry who due to their previous occupations are disabled. This industry has enabled many of these people to continue being productive Montanans who aren't a drain on the taxpayer. This is not even to mention how this industry has been a benefit to Montana's economy.

There are things in this bill that would seriously limit a persons ability to legally find relief from pain and other medical conditions. For many, as the law stands now, it takes thousands of dollars worth of visits and treatment from doctors before one can get a recommendation for a medical marijuana card. And now the drafters and supporters of this bill want to double that? How is that not an infringement of rights, and how could such restriction be what the people of Montana intended when they passed this act in 2004?

I urge you to consider the constitutionality of any and every part of HB68 and remember the oath to the constitution that you recently made publically. Your job is to uphold the constitution, not to pass laws that make special interest groups like big money and law enforcement happy.

Please vote no on this bill. This is not a bill that addresses the real problems that the people of Montana are concerned about concerning medical marijuana. This bill would only destroy peoples liberty and would greatly benefit only a few. That is not what Montana is about.

Sincerely, Andre Snitko.