



Good morning, Chairman Laughlin & members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on a matter critical to the future of public health, patient access, and the responsible oversight of cannabis in Pennsylvania.

I'm Meredith Buettner, Executive Director of the PA Cannabis Coalition, and I'm here to urge this body to consider the creation of an independent regulatory body tasked with overseeing the full spectrum of cannabinoids—from medical marijuana to emerging “gas station” cannabinoids like Delta-8 THC and synthetic THC analogs and adult use cannabis.

Fragmented oversight of cannabinoids is a threat to public health and the integrity of the legal cannabis industry. Today, Pennsylvania's cannabis oversight is split. The Department of Health regulates medical marijuana, while the flood of unregulated cannabinoids—often sold at gas stations, vape shops, and online—is largely ignored by the Commonwealth's existing framework. This regulatory vacuum enables products with questionable safety, inconsistent labeling, and unverified potency to be sold to consumers, including minors, without age checks or manufacturing standards.

Meanwhile, Pennsylvania's medical marijuana program—despite its success—is constrained by inflexible rules, a siloed decision-making structure, and limited responsiveness to evolving science and patient needs. Operators are bound by outdated product definitions and overly cautious interpretations of law, while patients are often confused and underserved.

The creation of an independent regulatory agency would consolidate oversight, eliminate regulatory gaps and prepare the Commonwealth for the future. By creating a single authority, the legislature could standardize testing, packaging, labeling, and age restrictions across **all** cannabinoid products—regardless of whether they are derived from hemp or marijuana. This would address the loophole that allows unregulated, intoxicating cannabinoids to proliferate unchecked in Pennsylvania communities.

An independent regulatory body would be better positioned to develop nuanced, cannabinoid-specific policies based on toxicology, public health data, and evolving consumer trends—rather than relying on generalist public health frameworks that weren't built with cannabinoids in mind.

Today, licensed medical marijuana operators comply with some of the strictest regulations in the country. Meanwhile, unlicensed sellers face virtually none. This body could enforce fairness in the market while protecting legitimate businesses that invest heavily in compliance and consumer safety.

As the legislature pursues broader cannabis reform, this infrastructure would already exist ensuring the Commonwealth is ready to handle the transition from day one.

Most importantly, this reform would protect Pennsylvania's patients and consumers. Patients deserve products that are safe, accessible, and supported by clear standards. Parents deserve to know that intoxicating cannabinoids aren't being sold without guardrails. And taxpayers deserve a system that uses resources efficiently and effectively.

This is not about expanding cannabis use—it's about regulating what already exists in our communities, and doing so with the same care, rigor, and accountability we apply to alcohol, tobacco, and prescription drugs.

Pennsylvania has the opportunity to become a national leader—not just in cannabis reform, but in cannabinoid regulation as a whole. By establishing an independent regulatory body, we can create a more responsive, unified, and science-based system that protects consumers, supports legitimate businesses, and prepares our state for the future.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this issue. I look forward to answering your questions alongside my colleagues.