

Bill introduced allowing State to grow marijuana

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Bi-partisan Bill Would Take Away Medical Marijuana Cardholder's Ability to Grow Their Own Pot; Would Cost \$98 per ounce

SALEM, Ore. — A bi-partisan group of legislators have introduced legislation to improve the safety of patients participating in Oregon's Medical Marijuana program. House Bill 3274 transfers more of the program's responsibilities from patients and caregivers to the state, which would be solely charged with growing and dispensing the marijuana.

“Oregonians have voted to authorize the use of medical marijuana, yet the Legislature has failed to provide adequate safeguards for citizens who have a legitimate need for it,” said Rep. Carolyn Tomei (D-Milwaukie).

Rep. Ron Maurer (R-Grants Pass) agrees, “Our current system isn't working, and we need to move quickly to protect patient safety.”

HB 3274 directs the State to establish and operate a marijuana production facility and distribute the drug to pharmacies for dispensing to cardholders and primary caregivers. The bill imposes a \$98 per ounce tax on marijuana, which would cover the state's costs of operating and securing the production center.

“Many patients have no assurance that their marijuana is not laced with pesticides or other toxic chemicals,” said Rep. Jim Thompson (R-Dallas). “If passed into law, this legislation will implement safe standards to dispense the drug through a tightly-controlled system.”

The legislators also believe that HB 3274 will improve public safety by eliminating private medical marijuana grow sites. Some private growers have been accused of illegally selling the marijuana to non-cardholders, while other sites have been targeted by burglaries and home invasions.

“There are growing concerns that private grow sites are being misused for illegal marijuana sales, threatening the safety and well-being of legitimate participants in the program,” said Rep. Chris Harker (D-Beaverton). “HB 3274 takes medical marijuana off the streets and into a safer and more secure environment.”

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