

Senators and Representatives, Good afternoon and thank you for allowing me to testify before you today.

My name is Terry Lemming and I am the police chief in Lockport, representing the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police.

(Added to testimony after hearing pro legalization people who testified just before).

Like Mr. Abbott, I too am a retired ISP officer who retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. I actually went to the training academy with Mr. Abbott. I was the Statewide Drug Enforcement Coordinator for the ISP from 2004 to 2008, and from 2008 until earlier this year, I was the President of the Illinois Drug Enforcement Officers Association. Like Mr. Franklin from Baltimore PD, I too was an undercover officer. I mention this to you because it may be the only thing I have in common now with Mr. Abbott and Mr. Franklin.

Because this hearing is on the public safety aspects of the cannabis regulation and taxation act, I thought it would be best to speak to law enforcement professionals in states that currently have recreational marijuana laws in place.

I contacted police chiefs from all of the states that have recreational cannabis laws. I never asked them about tax revenue or other issues because that is not their area of expertise or the subject of this hearing.

I spoke with Washington DC Police Chief Peter Newsham yesterday who advised that DC has had recreational marijuana since late 2014.

Chief Newsham advised that a good thing that came of the law was the reduction in the number of possession of cannabis arrests which freed

up officers. This was offset by an escalating number of complaints for smoking cannabis in public.

Chief Newsham said that a common problem is complaints from those living in apartment buildings.

Residents complain that smoked cannabis is emanating through the vents of apartments not using cannabis, with children present.

Unfortunately, the law **allows** this and the DC police cannot do anything about it.

Chief Newsham saw no change in organized crime's involvement since recreational cannabis became law.

I spoke with Chief Jim Soucy of Kittery Maine. Maine passed a recreational cannabis law on 1-1-17. Retail sales and cultivation starts on 1-1-18.

Chief Soucy advised that he has seen no obvious change in organized crime's influence as the state went from just medical cannabis, to recreational cannabis, however, he said that it is too early to judge.

Chief Soucy believes that recreational cannabis has caused a spike in calls for service, many of which are calls for smoking marijuana in public and calls for an odor of cannabis.

I also spoke to Colorado Springs, Colorado Police Chief Pete Carey who advised that his town opted out of the recreational marijuana law but does have medical cannabis.

Colorado allows home grows for medical cannabis and Chief Carey advised that organized crime groups came in and began their own illegal grow operations in homes.

These groups then sell the illegal marijuana on the black market, undercutting the medical and recreational prices. They also sell the

cannabis out of state. He does not advocate for allowing home grows of cannabis.

Chief Carey warned that recreational cannabis will bring organized crime groups that will also be involved in other crimes such as identity theft, financial fraud and shop lifting.

I have passed out a one-page chart from the Denver Police Department's web site, showing a 52% increase in crime since recreational cannabis was enacted in Colorado.

I spoke with Director Chuck Calloway of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

Nevada began their recreational cannabis law on 1-1-17.

The retail sales of recreational cannabis began on July 1st of 2017. Almost immediately there were robberies and burglaries of retail establishments in Las Vegas.

From July 1 to mid-August, there were 13 burglaries and robberies of retail establishments. Retail cannabis sales is a cash business and criminals know this.

In the short time that the retail sales began, Las Vegas has had two high profile fatal vehicle crashes attributed to cannabis.

From July 1st to mid-August of this year Las Vegas Metro responded to 250 calls for service at retail cannabis stores.

All of the retail cannabis stores are in lower income areas and none are in affluent areas.

Director Calloway advised that they were told that the recreational cannabis law would free the police up to address other law enforcement concerns. He advised that that is absolutely not true.

Homelessness, calls for service at retail establishments, traffic crashes, domestics, retail thefts and other crimes appear to be on the rise but because the retail sales just began, he advised that the statistics will speak for themselves in the future.

He does not recommend allowing home grows, which Nevada allows, for the same reasons Chief Carey mentioned.

Director Calloway had three major concerns about recreational cannabis:

- 1 Use by adolescents will rise significantly
- 2 traffic crashes and fatal crashes will rise
- 3 Crime will increase

I also spoke to Chief Ed Medrano from Gardena California.

California began recreational use of cannabis 1-1-17, and will begin retail sales on 1-1-18. Also beginning on 1-1-18, medical cannabis patients will pay no retail tax.

Beginning on 1-1-18, organized crime groups and those fraudulently obtaining a medical cannabis license will be undercutting California's 15% state tax.

California **does** allow home grows of six plants per person. Chief Medrano advised that since the recreational law went into effect, there has been a significant increase in illegal home grows where organized criminal groups rent homes and use every room to grow cannabis.

In many cases, the alterations to the home ruin it for future occupancy.

They have also seen an increase in burglaries and robberies of illegal grow operations where large amounts of cannabis is taken.

Chief Medrano advised that it is difficult to determine the extent of cannabis impairment in drivers on the road because California has not come up with a level of impairment as Illinois has.

Currently when a person tests over the legal limit for alcohol, they do not test for other drugs even though it is common for impaired drivers to also be under the influence of cannabis, which does not give authorities a clear picture of the problem.

I must note that in Illinois it is common for officers to test for alcohol first because testing equipment is provided and maintained by the state for free.

Testing for cannabis impairment has to be sent to a private lab, which costs the Illinois police department hundreds of dollars per test.

This is why alcohol testing is first and testing for marijuana is only after a failed alcohol test. Illinois as well does not have an accurate picture of marijuana impaired driving.

I also spoke to Chief John Carmichael of the Walpole Massachusetts Police Department.

Massachusetts' recreational cannabis law began in November of 2016. They do allow home grows of up to 12 plants.

He advised that recreational cannabis advocates will say that recreational cannabis will eliminate the black market and reduce crime. He advised that was not the case in Walpole.

Since recreational cannabis was approved, there was an increase in illegal home grows and they had seen numerous explosions in homes

from people attempting to extract oils from cannabis with butane, something that they had not seen before.

Chief Carmichael's biggest fear of recreational cannabis is a significant increase in stoned drivers. Earlier this year Trooper Claidy of the Massachusetts State Police was killed in a head on collision with a driver who was smoking cannabis and had just left a dispensary.

Chief Carmichael advised that because the law is new, there is no baseline of comparison.

Chief Carmichael also said that the presence of organized crime has increased from when Massachusetts had only medical cannabis and his prediction is that Massachusetts will be supplying the east coast with marijuana grown in Massachusetts and illegally diverted to other states, until other east coast states have recreational laws.

On a side note, a recent study by the Government's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area found of 394 highway vehicle seizures of Colorado cannabis, most were illegally diverted to 5 different states, of which Illinois was one.

In Conclusion:

I asked the chiefs to give advice to this body on public safety aspects of recreational cannabis and all said that Illinois should wait until more studies are done and statistics collected before proceeding with a recreational cannabis law.