



Testimony in Opposition to Excluding Individuals with a Felony Record from Participating in the Medical Marijuana Industry: S2371

Senate Judiciary Committee

March 15, 2022

The Economic Progress Institute opposes Senate Bill 2371 which would make it more difficult for individuals harmed by the decades-long criminalization of cannabis to take part in the legal medical marijuana market. At this time, when legalization for adult recreational use is being considered and appears likely to become a reality, this proposal would be a move in the wrong direction, increasing barriers to entry and to equity.

Beyond further restricting entry, by rejecting *renewals* of applications and licenses, the bill language even appears to eject people already engaged in the industry, potentially causing losses of jobs or businesses and livelihoods.

Furthermore, although the bill language is not entirely clear, our reading of it indicates that individuals who are currently qualifying patients for medical marijuana (and who have a doctor's authorization or prescription) will be denied renewal of their card – and appropriate medical care – if they ever had a felony conviction.

However, even if this interference with patients and their medical care was not the intent of the bill, the rest of the bill remains problematic and **a step backwards for equity and for repairing the harms caused by the war on drugs and the criminalization of cannabis.**