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Washington To Take Major Step in Supporting Legal Marijuana

WACA, representing licensed marijuana industry, led efforts to support expansion of regulated marketplace

WASHINGTON – The Washington CannaBusiness Association (WACA), a professional association comprised solely of 502-licensed producers, processors and retailers of legal marijuana, looks ahead today to a major milestone in the establishment of a fully-regulated marketplace for cannabis. On July 1, as directed by the WACA-supported bipartisan 2015 Cannabis Patient Protection Act, state law will require all marijuana businesses to be licensed under the regulatory authority of the Liquor and Cannabis Board. For the first time, all consumers and patients will be protected by the requirements of the law, including product testing and regulatory compliance. The July 1 deadline is a key date for ending the unregulated sale of marijuana in Washington.

WACA led the charge on behalf of the regulated marijuana industry in 2015 to help earn support for enfoldng the existing unregulated medicinal marijuana marketplace into a system strengthened by rigorous safety standards and tax-collecting infrastructure created by Washington voters with I-502 in November 2012. Before Governor Inslee signed it into law, the Cannabis Patient Protection Act passed the State Senate with a 41-8 bipartisan vote and the State House with a 60-36 bipartisan vote, illustrating the collaborative support for a successful marijuana marketplace. The legislation also created a new medical marijuana certification for retail businesses working to support patient needs as prescribed by a physician.

“State voters really led the way in approving a regulated marijuana marketplace and our elected leaders have worked hard to implement regulations to ensure that patients and general consumers alike have access to safe and quality-controlled products,” **said WACA Executive Director Vicki Christophersen.** “And while much work remains to be done to protect public safety and the integrity of the regulated marketplace, we are proud of the role our members have played in expanding protections for consumers and patients. Establishing a single system for legal marijuana, represented by the Cannabis Patient Protection Act, was our top legislative priority in 2015. As we look forward to this Friday’s deadline for requiring all marijuana businesses to operate with a license from the Liquor and Cannabis Board, we will continue to support policies at the local and state

level that strive to keep marijuana out of the hands of kids and that prioritize public safety.”

Following on a successful 2015 Legislative Session, WACA worked on behalf of its members in the regulated marijuana marketplace as the only professional marijuana industry association to introduce legislation which survived the unexpected 2016 Special Session and that was signed into law. WACA’s track-record of working collaboratively with regulators and elected leaders directly corresponds with its priority to build a solid foundation for a safe and regulated industry and to be responsible neighbors in the communities where members operate.

2016

- HB 2584: Creates new protections to support the safety and privacy of individuals applying for or holding an I-502 license issued by the Liquor and Cannabis Board.
- SB 6341: Supports increased education about cannabis products between producers, processors, retailers and consumers by allowing vendor-days while also upholding strict marketing regulations aimed at keeping marijuana out of the hands of kids.

2015

- Cannabis Patient Protection Act: Earned overwhelming bipartisan support to create a single regulated marketplace for recreational and medical marijuana.
- 2HB 2136: Created a new streamlined tax structure for the regulated industry to eliminate unintended consequences of I-502 such as double-taxation. Also created new regulations to allow third-party safe transport of cannabis products and associated revenue.

WACA is also the primary industry voice in supporting regulatory requirements regarding pesticides in order to protect public safety. Most recently, WACA led the work to support pesticide action levels, including its advocacy for science-based best practices for governing pesticide use at the LCB [earlier this year](#). WACA argued, and the LCB agreed, that pesticide action levels are standard in the food industry and other industries that create products for human consumption. Previously, tolerance standards were applied to pesticides in marijuana that were out of alignment with analogous industries, did not recognize the presence of pesticides in our natural environment and were impossible to verify in the lab.

About Washington CannaBusiness Association

Washington CannaBusiness Association solely represents Washington’s licensed and regulated cannabis businesses and provides its members with general support and representation before regulatory agencies and the legislature. As an association of cannabis producers, processors and retailers who have gathered to promote the private cannabis industry created by Initiative 502 and our member companies, our mission is to advocate on behalf of our member companies in the legislative, regulatory, legal and public policy arenas.

Learn more about Washington CannaBusiness Association by visiting our website at <http://www.wacannabusiness.org>

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