

## Seritalla, Freda

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**From:** press@oaict.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 3:41 PM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB-487

To the members of the Judiciary Committee:

We, the undersigned, write in support of SB-487 AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGALIZATION, TAXATION, AND REGULATION OF THE RETAIL SALE AND RECREATIONAL USE OF MARIJUANA AND CONCERNING THE PRODUCTION AND REGULATION OF HEMP.

Prohibition has done little to curb what politicians of the past considered undesirable behavior, and much to create a class of criminals out people who people who possess a plant. We believe the time has come to recognize cannabis for what it is—a de facto commercial product that has long been been available on the illicit market, and more recently in Connecticut as medicine.

We consider it first and foremost as a criminal justice issue, that it is a moral outrage to lock people in cages for the possession of a plant which is enjoyed medicinally and recreationally by many. Use of marijuana is not fatal, but being arrested for having it incurs the risk as long as laws are enforced by armed men and women. Bad laws make for bad policing. We also believe that the prosecutors of our state will enjoy having more time to work on serious crimes when cannabis possession is taken off their desk.

Secondly, we consider cannabis to be a consumer good. Buyers should be afforded the same protections they enjoy at the pharmacy or green grocer. Retailers should be subject to the same taxes other retailers pay.

Finally, we prefer individual responsibility and free choice over prohibition. The Volstead Act—a social engineering experiment of the early 20th century—failed miserably with substandard or dangerous products and organized crime stepping in to meet the demands of an alcohol market that could not be legislated away. In our time, we recognize that cannabis is a medical and recreational product that is better controlled by the effects of the market and common sense regulation than by the threat of prison.

We urge this committee to refer SB-487 to the floor, and urge the Connecticut General Assembly to pass a law whose time has come.

Sincerely,

Jody Weitzman, Connecticut Chair  
David Golden, Connecticut Vice-Chair  
Eduardo Lopez-Reyes, Connecticut Secretary

Our America Initiative - Connecticut  
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