Chairs and distinguished members of the committee,

My name is Tiffany Barnard Davidson. I live in Westport, CT. I am testifying in response to SB-1085.

I DO NOT support the bill.

On December 9, 2018, my eyes were forever opened to marijuana addiction and its deleterious consequences.

In the early evening of December 9, my then-17-year-old son, my only child, lay in my arms sobbing uncontrollably. I would soon learn that he was struggling with marijuana addiction. We took swift action and today I am able to report that my son has 103 days of clean time.

But this, while a vital step, is only the tip of the iceberg.

His road to recovery and my conviction to fight the legalization of recreational marijuana have just begun. Please take a good look at me and know that this is NOT the last time you will see or hear from me - or from him. I believe you have all received a video link to the testimony he gave at the mayor's press conference in Wallingford last weekend.

My bright, enthusiastic, confident, and curious son became a shell of his former self in just six short months of vaping 97% THC oil. What started as recreational use with friends increased exponentially into daily use, multiple times a day, in his room, by himself, with plans to move on to harder drugs. That was my son until the evening of December 9 when he had the remarkable self-awareness to see that his behavior was no different than that of a junkie shooting heroin in a back alley.

And this, DESPITE the shameless snow job that Big Marijuana has propagated in this country and that he had internalized as TRUTH:

THAT marijuana is NOT addictive.

THAT marijuana is merely a harmless pleasure.

THAT marijuana is NOT a gateway drug.

I stand here on behalf of my family and the countless number of families I have met in 3 short months whose lives have been upended by addiction. Many of those stories are far more tragic than mine, but dead youth can't speak and the parents of those children are often too traumatized.

If YOU vote to legalize recreational marijuana, YOU will have blood on your hands.

YOU will be responsible for encouraging marijuana use and for the steady increase in use.

YOU will be responsible for the increase in addiction as a result of increased use.

YOU will be responsible for every family brought to its knees by this drug and by the drugs that follow once the high you get from marijuana is no longer high enough.

YOU will be responsible for each and every injury and fatality due to driving under the influence of marijuana.

And YOU will be responsible for telling YOUR children and grandchildren and YOUR constituents and THEIR children that YOU didn't bother to read the scholarly articles and studies in the New England Journal of Medicine, that YOU didn't have time to meet with the police chiefs or the emergency room workers or the parents of dead kids.

Or the parents of kids in recovery.

Or the kids in recovery.

That YOU didn't bother to take the time because YOU were so blinded by the shiny pennies that the lobbyists poured into YOUR campaign coffers.

YOU will be no better than the legislators who let the Opioid Epidemic happen.

Thank you.