To: Co-Chairman Senator Winfield and Representative Stafstrom and distinguished members of the committee

Fr: Raymond Vitali 48 Founders Way, Milford CT 06460

Re: S.B. No.1085 (An Act Concerning the Legalization of the Retail Sale and Possession of Cannabis and Concerning Erasure of Criminal Records in the Case of Convictions Based on the Possession of a Small Amount of Cannabis.)

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to give testimony today and for your dedication and the work that you do as a legislator. It is **not easy job** and the decisions that you will be making in the very near future will be **overwhelming and life changing for many of the citizens of this State.**

***I would like to state that I am emphatically and unequivocally opposed to the passage of S.B. 1085 An Act Concerning the Legalization of the Retail Sale and Possession of Cannabis and Concerning Erasure of Criminal Records in the Case of Convictions Based on the Possession of a Small Amount of Cannabis.**

I Come to you today as a;

- *Retired **Teacher, Administrator** of an elementary and middle School.*
- *Chair of the board of directors of the **United Way of Milford.***
- *Member of the board of directors of **Bridges Health Care** and a Former chair of the Board.*
- *Liaison to the **Milford Board of Health.***
- *Co-chair and former chair of the **Milford Prevention Council.***
- *Sitting member of the **Milford Board of Alderman** For the past 12 years.*

Federal law

As you well know: Under federal law, marijuana is considered a Schedule I substance and it is illegal to use, possess, cultivate, or distribute. While each state may have its own marijuana laws, they *cannot overturn or preempt federal law.*

This body has the full knowledge that the state's decision to legalize the recreational use of Marijuana is a federal offense. We the public need to convince you, our state legislators, that it is not a good idea to attempt to override (even though you can't) the conviction of what our federal legislators have put in place to protect the health and welfare of not only our youth but the general population. **At any point in time the Feds could, at their discretion, come and shut down all marijuana related businesses.**

Let me remind you of the **predicament** that the legislators in the early 80's had put us in, as parents, when they changed the drinking age from 21 to 18 and back to 21. **How do you deal with that conundrum when you are trying to keep your child safe from doing harm to themselves and others by the use and abuse of alcohol, at even a younger age? When 18 was then the Law!** We would now classify these people, (legislators) as non-thinkers. In truth, they, as adults were our kid's worst enemies! Therefore, don't you now become **our kid's worst enemie**s in agreeing to legalize the use of recreational marijuana in this State. Those of you who are parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents with the change in the law will be going through some horrific experiences **in your** future **and more importantly in the future of those who will use and abuse marijuana.**

- The Governor recognizes the harmful effects of the ingestion of **sugar** into the body, especially with young children by increasing the cost of sugared drinks, hopefully, deterring their use, and therefore he is cognizant of **their inability to make good decisions**. He feels as though these individuals need government intervention to make right decision. **Never the less he is a proponent of the legalization of Marijuana** and feels younger people will be mature enough to **make the right decisions** when it comes to putting a foreign (toxic) chemical into their body that is more harmful and life changing. Even though those brains will not be maturing until they reach the age 25, some by 30 and for some never.
- The Governor recognizes the harmful effects of single use plastic bags to the environment. However, he is a **proponent of the legalization of Marijuana** with little consideration as to the greater importance of this problem to our youth and the general population.
- The Governor recognizes the budget deficit and will be recommending a $.25 deposit on wine and liquor bottles but is a **proponent of the legalization of marijuana** and fails to recognize the cost of rehabilitation and other ancillary costs relating to its legalization.
    - Ex: **Colorado** is expending $4.50 for associated costs relating to the legalization of marijuana for every $1.00 of revenue. Would you even think of running your household budget this way? **Moreover, will you run your state's budget this way?**

Having said that, let us put **some common sense theories** and facts together and recognize, **as a bi-partisan group, not to vote to legalize the use of marijuana** and to look at the reasons why you should **not vote** in the affirmative. Be strong and independent in your vote by **knowing you are the shepherds of our youth and general population's safety, health and welfare.**

According to SAM (**Smart Approaches to Marijuana**)

- **Out of pocket costs increased in**
    - Auto insurance
        - On average, states saw a **10% increase** in auto premiums the year they legalized and a **16% increase** the year after in all of insurance areas.
            - **Home insurance, Renter's Insurance, Life Insurance Health Insurance, Worker's comp, and Retail business insurance**

- **Research surrounding commercialization of marijuana demonstrates:**
    - 63% for 8th graders and 10th graders and 53% o 12th graders admitted to vaping the drug (TCP)
    - Users are more than twice as likely to move on to abuse prescription opioids
    - Drugged driving rates have more than doubled in Colorado, going from killing roughly one person every 6.5 days to every 2.5 days
    - Decline in IQ scores of about 8-10 points
    - Reduced grades and lower graduation rates
    - The **NEW** marijuana is 20-30% more potent than the **OLD**
    - It can worsen the symptoms of mental health issues
    -

I humbly ask that you take the time in your deliberations to carefully research and do your due diligence in making a decision that will affect our youth for their lifetime. Please be mindful that a final decision does not need to take place today but could be put off until tomorrow.

Thank you for your time.