

# Senate Judiciary Committee

*Pete Mulvey 271-4063*

**HB 301**, relative to cultivation locations for alternative treatment centers.

**Hearing Date:** April 15, 2025

**Time Opened:** 1:55 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 2:16 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Gannon, Abbas, McConkey, Altschiller and Reardon

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill allows additional cultivation centers to be considered for alternative treatment centers.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Vail

Rep. H. Howard

Rep. Newell

Rep. W. Thomas

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**Who supports the bill:** 25 individuals signed in support of HB 301. Contact peter.mulvey@gc.nh.gov for further details.

**Who opposes the bill:** Five individuals signed in opposition to HB 301. Contact peter.mulvey@gc.nh.gov for further details.

**Who is neutral on the bill:** N/A

**Summary of testimony:**

**Representative Suzanne Vail**

**Hillsborough – District 6**

- Rep. Vail introduced HB 301, which enabled Alternative Treatment Centers to utilize an additional growing location, namely a green house, for cultivating therapeutic cannabis.
- Green houses in particular present energy cost savings and yield a greater quality product.
- Current law restricts each Alternative Treatment Center to one indoor grow house, reliant on artificial lighting and climate control.
- Additional growing locations would still be subject to the same Department of Health and Human Services oversight and would be subject to local regulations as well.
- Sen. Altschiller asked if an additional cultivation location had to be within a certain boundary of the ATC, or if the permitting process must be redone from scratch.
- Rep. Vail said that regardless of location, entirely new permitting, approval and application would be required for an additional location.

## **Dr. Jerry Knirk**

### **Chair, Therapeutic Cannabis Medical Oversight Board**

- HB 301 would allow ATCs to have greenhouses as cultivation locations.
- Cannabis grown indoors is costly, and HB 301 would enable reductions.
- Dr. Knirk emphasized that HB 301 passed on a voice vote in the House of Representatives.
- Indoor grow houses require significant light and heat, and therefore, electricity.
- A greenhouse would work with sunlight to provide heat and lighting naturally and at a low cost.
- Dr. Knirk said that Cannabis grew better in natural sunlight as compared to artificial lighting.
- The quality of the cannabinoids produced will improve, as will costs because consumers won't have to purchase as much if each yield is greater in quality and quantity.
- Dr. Knirk maintained that any additional cultivation location will be subject to all the same rules for security in the existing cultivation location.
- Sen. Abbas asked Mr. Knirk how much costs would be reduced.
- Mr. Knirk said he didn't have a precise number. Electricity was a significant expense.
- Sen. Abbas asked how much the price of the product would be reduced.
- Mr. Knirk said that would be downstream from production cost savings and efficiency improvements. An exact figure could not be provided.

## **Sue Homola**

### **Smart Approaches to Marijuana**

- Ms. Homola spoke in opposition and maintained that reducing patient costs was a compassionate goal.
- The alternative treatment centers were not at capacity. Ms. Homola attested that they can fully utilize their capacity to reduce costs.
- Ms. Homola wanted greater detail and figures on patient costs, ATC expenses, and revenues to get a better understanding of the therapeutic cannabis market.
- Each ATC gave away roughly half a million dollars in the preceding year for compassionate care discounts. Healthy profits would enable such generous discounts according to Ms. Homola.
- Line 8 was identified, which did not require the notification of law enforcement personnel, or drug addiction specialists when a new location is considered.
- Ms. Homola believed that providing notification to card holders, and no other stakeholders, would animate a large group to descend on a selectboard meeting to overwhelm local testimony.

## **Dr. Joe Hannon**

- Dr. Hannon spoke in support of HB 301.
- HB 301 is a modest but important step in strengthening the alternative treatment program.
- Dr. Hannon believed the bill would improve patient access and affordability via the additional cultivation location.
- Increased yields would stabilize supply and lower costs for consumers.
- Greenhouse gases were sustainable and effective in cultivation while also lowering environmental impact, costs, and improving cannabinoid quality.
- HB 301 required collaboration and local input.
- Dr. Hannon recognized that anyone could theoretically stack a meeting for any purpose, which would not change how the proposal is ultimately decided.
- Dr. Hannon urged the committee to vote HB 301 ought to pass.

## **Rep. Heath Howard**

### **Strafford – District 4**

- Rep. Howard spoke in favor of HB 301.
- Rep. Howard identified himself as a patient with the therapeutic cannabis program.
- Therapeutic products were cheaper in Massachusetts, Vermont, and Maine.
- New Hampshire overcharged its patients compared to other regional market rates.
- HB 301 would be an appropriate use of basic market forces to mitigate costs according to Rep. Howard.

- The committee was encouraged to tour GraniteLeaf Cannabis's facilities to gain a better understanding of the control and security of their operations.

**Adam Schmidt**

**Vice President, J. Grimbali Strategic Solutions**

- Mr. Schmidt spoke on behalf of Mr. Matt Simon of GraniteLeaf Cannabis, who could not appear due to an accident on Interstate 93.
- Many of the provisions within HB 301 were permitted in neighboring states. Mr. Schmidt maintained on behalf of Mr. Simon that in-state ATCs deserved the same opportunities as neighboring out-of-state ATCs.
- GraniteLeaf Cannabis did not believe that HB 301 would necessarily increase production but rather improve their efficiency and lower costs.
- Mr. Schmidt added that the effort in the House of Representatives was to narrow HB 301 in relation to law enforcement's concerns surrounding previous attempts at similar policies.
- Sen. Abbas asked if the ATCs had done any type of analysis on patient prices coming from HB 301 or other changes to growing.
- Mr. Schmidt said he would be happy to confer with Mr. Simon on the question.

PM

Date Hearing Report completed: April 22, 2025