October 30, 2017

The Honorable Paul LePage
Governor
State of Maine, #1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor LePage:

Thank you for your continued commitment to serving the citizens of Maine by promoting policies that enhance public health and public safety. As you know, SAM Action has been working with SAM Maine and other partners in the state to monitor the marijuana industry's influence while implementing the legalization of recreational marijuana. As you fulfill your obligations, we are imploring you to veto LD 1650, the Act to Amend the Marijuana Legalization Act.

SAM Action (Smart Approaches to Marijuana Action) is an organization that works with both public and private leaders across the country to protect children, employers, and communities from the profit-driven motives of the marijuana industry. We work closely with decision makers so that roadways are kept safe, youth exposure to marijuana products and advertisers are eliminated, and employers can continue to manage safe and productive workplaces.

One of the biggest issues that SAM Action is concerned about is that the initiative will allow for increased access to children. With many recent studies pointing to marijuana increasing the likelihood in developing or worsening mental health issues, the State should look at every avenue to reduce a child’s ability to access the product. Like you, we want to make sure that young people can grow to their capabilities. Science continues to show that marijuana certainly impedes young people from achieving their potential in both social and economic terms.

SAM Action also has great concern with the inclusion of marijuana social clubs included in the language. These clubs will not only lead to the normalization of this addictive drug but also create a more dangerous situation on Maine roadways. With no test available to detect marijuana impairment, and with marijuana impairment lasting much longer than alcohol impairment, there is grave concern that these clubs will also lead to more intoxicated drivers. Recent reports from AAA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have found that marijuana-impaired drivers involved in traffic fatalities have increased in legalized states.

These issues, along with many other public health and safety concerns, are the reasons that we are asking you to veto LD 1650 and keep our streets safe and pot out of the hands of children. If you would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact me at kevin@samaction.net. Thank you for your service to Maine and your leadership in protecting all of Maine’s citizens.

Sincerely,

Kevin Sabet
President, SAM Action