



May 25, 2018

The Honorable Art Eggleton  
Chair, Standing Committee on  
Social Affairs, Science and Technology  
The Senate of Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada

The Honorable Judith Seidman  
Deputy Chair, Standing Committee on  
Social Affairs, Science and Technology  
The Senate of Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada

Dear Senators,

We represent Smart Approaches to Marijuana, the leading, US based non-partisan organization offering a science-based approach to marijuana policy. SAM was founded after the Democratic Congressman and mental health advocate from Rhode Island, Patrick J. Kennedy, left his seat and Dr. Kevin Sabet stepped down as a senior advisor on drug policy in the Obama Administration to become the President and Chief Executive Officer of SAM.

After learning painful lessons related to legal opioids and Big Tobacco, we know public health would suffer if we incentivized another legal addiction industry. History will not look kindly on the enablers and boosters of the marijuana industry. Already, marijuana industry lobbyists are salivating at the prospects of a legal Canadian market.

It is shocking that the Canadian Senate would take at face value testimony from a representative of the marijuana industry without any disclosure of how she stands to profit from legal cannabis policies. In the days of Big Tobacco, lawmakers were deceived by industry-funded organizations like the Tobacco Institute. We should not repeat the mistakes of the past and take another drug industry at their word.

Already, we have seen a striking increase in roadway fatalities from stoned driving, a proliferation of kid-friendly products like gummies, candies, and other edibles, increasing popularity of high-potency extracts (including 99% THC products), and a corresponding rise in the proportion of heavy users in legalized states.

Our work is guided by scientists from universities such as Harvard, Yale, University of Colorado, and other institutions. Our science advisory board members have served as reviewers for cannabis reports composed by the World Health Organization and National Academy of Sciences. Advisory board members have even served on marijuana legalization regulatory boards in states like Colorado.

We urge you to allow SAM the opportunity to address these issues in an open, fair, transparent, and respectful manner should the government desire to do so.

Respectfully,

Dr. Kevin A. Sabet  
President & CEO  
Smart Approaches to Marijuana

The Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy  
Honorary Advisor  
Smart Approaches to Marijuana