



Consulting New Brunswickers: The Legalization of Recreational Cannabis in New Brunswick

Final Report of the Select Committee on Cannabis

**Third Session
Fifty-eight Legislative Assembly
of the Province of New Brunswick**

September 2017



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The Legalization of
Recreational Cannabis
in New Brunswick**

**Final Report
of the
Select Committee on Cannabis**

**Third Session of the
58th Legislative Assembly
of New Brunswick**

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M.L.A., Kent South

Gilles LePage, Vice Chair
M.L.A., Restigouche West

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Third Session

Fifty-eighth Legislative Assembly
of the Province of New Brunswick

Final Report of the
Select Committee on Cannabis

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick
P.O. Box 6000
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CANADA

September 2017

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September 1, 2017

To the Honourable
The Legislative Assembly of
The Province of New Brunswick

Mr. Speaker:

I have the pleasure to present herewith the Final Report of the Select Committee on Cannabis entitled *Consulting New Brunswickers: The Legalization of Recreational Cannabis in New Brunswick*. Your Committee was charged with the responsibility of conducting public consultations in relation to an interim report of the provincial Working Group on the Legalization of Cannabis, and reporting to the House with a summary of public consultations on the interim report.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank the presenters and members of the public who appeared before the Committee and those individuals and groups who submitted written briefs. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the Members of the Committee for their contribution in carrying out our mandate.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Benoît Bourque".

Benoît Bourque, M.L.A.
Chair

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Context	1
The General Consensus	2
Discussion: Retail Model	3
Discussion: Legal Age	4
Discussion: Youth	5
Focus on Education	5
Access	5
Mental Health	5
Discussion: Growing at Home and Possession Limits	6
Home Growth and Possession	6
Definition of Household	6
Discussion: Public Safety	7
Detection	7
Impairment at Work	7
Impaired Driving	7
Discussion: Economic Development	8
Production Opportunities	8
Potency	8
First Nations	8
Invest in Training	8
Discussion: Revenue and Expenditure	9
Supply	9
<i>Smoke Free Places Act</i>	9
Revenue Sharing with Municipalities	9
Education	9
Appendix A:	
Motion to Establish the Select Committee	10
Appendix B:	
List of Public Hearing Participants and Written Briefs Submitted	12
Appendix C:	
Medical Cannabis, Edibles and Industrial Hemp	14
Price	14
Impairment	14
Access	14
Medical Professionals	14
Research	14
Edibles	14
Industrial Hemp	14

Introduction

In preparation for the Government of Canada's proposal to legalize recreational cannabis on July 1, 2018, the Government of New Brunswick announced the formation of the Working Group on the Legalization of Cannabis on March 7, 2017. Their mandate was to consult with provincial and federal stakeholders to assess the risks and opportunities of recreational cannabis legalization and to provide recommendations for a provincial approach. Their recommendations were released in a [report](#) published on June 21, 2017.

On April 28, 2017, the provincial government introduced a motion (Appendix A) in the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick to establish a select committee to conduct public consultations on the legalization of recreational cannabis. In accordance with the mandate given to it by the Legislative Assembly, the Select Committee on Cannabis was tasked with seeking input from New Brunswickers on whether the model proposed by the Working Group needs improvements.

Context

The Government of Canada committed to legalizing recreational cannabis in 2015, marking the end of a 90-year prohibition in Canada. In December 2016, the federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation released [A Framework for the Legalization of Cannabis in Canada](#). The report's recommendations are based on available research and public consultations, with more than 80 recommendations that served as the basis of its policies for legalization.

The [Cannabis Act](#) (Bill C-45) and [An Act to Amend the Criminal Code](#) (Bill C-46) were tabled in the House of Commons on April 13, 2017. The *Cannabis Act* decriminalizes recreational cannabis and grants the federal government the power to licence producers, as is currently the case for medical cannabis. The provinces and territories have the responsibility to

Over 70 presenters appeared before the Committee during its public consultations in Grand Falls, Atholville, St. Stephen, Saint John, Moncton, Miramichi, and Fredericton. In addition, the Committee received local and national interest by way of 44 written submissions (Appendix B).

This report is intended to provide a summary of the many comments, suggestions and written submissions received by the Select Committee during the public consultations. Participants provided creative insights and perspectives to many of the questions that arose during consultations. There were varying points of view. Some New Brunswickers disagree with the federal government's decision to legalize recreational cannabis, while others see legalization as an economic opportunity. This report is intended to be an overview of public consultations and does not provide recommendations to the Legislative Assembly. Although medical cannabis, edibles and industrial hemp do not fall under the purview of the provincial government, many presenters expressed concerns to the Select Committee (Appendix C).

oversee the sale of recreational (non-medical) cannabis, as well as health and safety programming. Bill C-46 focuses on impaired driving by modernizing, simplifying, and strengthening the Criminal Code and creating tougher sanctions. It also creates new offences for drivers impaired by cannabis.

The federal government plans to have the two Bills come into force July 1, 2018, giving the provinces and territories a little over a year to create a distribution model and public health and safety initiatives. If a province or territory does not have a distribution model by this date, residents will be able to buy recreational cannabis by mail order from another province. This means provinces without a retailer will not gain any revenue from the legalization of recreational cannabis but will remain responsible for cannabis-related public health and safety.

The General Consensus

Varied points of views on the proposed framework for recreational cannabis in New Brunswick were brought forward to the Select Committee on Cannabis during province-wide public consultations. What the Committee heard will be presented in the following sections of this report. Although there

were varying opinions on the proposed model, presenters found consensus on certain points. In general, presenters agreed that a strategy for the legalization of recreational cannabis should include the following priorities:

Let's get it right

There is only one opportunity to implement the chosen model – presenters want the province to get it right the first time.

Invest in education

Presenters told the Committee that the legalization of recreational cannabis must include a robust educational campaign to help potential users of all ages make informed decisions.

Keep cannabis out of the hands of youth

Keeping youth safe is a top priority. Presenters agreed that the welfare of children and youth must be thoroughly considered in the design and implementation of recreational cannabis policies.

Address health concerns

Participants told the Committee they want New Brunswick to be proactive with physical and mental health resources, ensuring availability for those who need them.

Shut out organized crime

Participants agreed that cannabis should no longer fund organized crime. Instead, the Committee heard an overwhelming response that a portion of the proceeds from recreational cannabis sales should be directed to education and health care.

Ensure public safety

Participants want clear laws and consistent enforcement. At work, on the road or at home, they do not want the legalization of recreational cannabis to impact their safety or the safety of their loved ones.

Discussion: Retail Model

Working Group Recommendation

The New Brunswick Working Group on the Legalization of Cannabis studied the legalization of recreational cannabis in Colorado and Washington, who moved directly to a private delivery model that resulted in a large number of private cannabis businesses. These states have since found it difficult to regulate the private sector and keep out the illegal market. Based on

these experiences, the Working Group proposes that recreational cannabis be sold through a public distributor in government-operated stores. In the opinion of the Working Group, this poses the best compromise to restrict youth access to recreational cannabis and ensure prices can compete with the illegal market.

What We Heard

Many participants believe that private retailers would provide widespread economic benefits for New Brunswick. They pointed to cigarettes, which are currently sold privately, and Alcohol New Brunswick Liquor (ANBL), which also uses agency stores that are privately owned. Some also see an opportunity for smaller craft producers to enter the market. The Committee heard that innovation and adaptability, crucial for an emerging market, are hallmarks of private sector retailers and distributors.

Still, others reflected that the legalization of recreational cannabis will ensure a supply of safe regulated products.

Municipalities are concerned about the location of recreational cannabis stores. They asked the Province to clarify the role of municipalities in policy issues such as zoning and store location. Presenters also agree that cannabis retailers should be located far away from schools, playgrounds and daycare centers.

This should not be set with a Crown corporation [...] Innovation is driven by business.

Peter Gray

The majority of presenters agree that no matter the retailer, retail staff should be well trained and knowledgeable. Retailers should be able to inform patrons of the effects of use, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels and cannabidiol (CBD) levels, product recommendations, and guidelines for safe usage. It was suggested that provincial community colleges could offer training programs for retail workers.

Others called for a new Crown corporation managed by ANBL to be the recreational cannabis retailer in New Brunswick. Many think this would help keep cannabis profits from funding organized crime, regulate zoning for municipalities, and streamline distribution for producers. The Committee also heard this might facilitate enforcement and ensure standardized education and training in retail outlets.

Participants, including law enforcement, urged the Province to ensure legal recreational cannabis is priced to try to eradicate the illegal market.

Participants were split in their opinion about whether cannabis and alcohol should be sold in the same retail outlet. Some are fearful this would encourage co-consumption and would pose a danger of relapse for recovering drug and/or alcohol dependencies. Others believe it would be a waste of resources to have separate retail locations exclusively for recreational cannabis.

[A Crown corporation] approach is one which Downtown Grand Falls and I support for many reasons, notably, the experience of the retailer in the sale of alcohol and avoiding the duplication of services.

Denis Durepos

Discussion: Legal Age

Working Group Recommendation

The federal *Cannabis Act* sets a minimum age of 18 for the possession and consumption of recreational cannabis. Although 18 will be the minimum legal age in Canada, the provinces and territories can set a

higher age limit. The New Brunswick Working Group on the Legalization of Cannabis proposes that the legal age be set at 19 to harmonize with the legal age for alcohol and tobacco.

What We Heard

Many participants agree with the Working Group's proposed age of 19 as it aligns with the legal drinking age, the age of majority and would streamline enforcement efforts. Some also noted that because many young people already consume cannabis, setting the legal age higher than 19 could potentially fuel the illegal market.

However, presenters were not unanimous. The Committee heard that many, including the medical community, are concerned about the effect of cannabis on the developing brain. Some also suggested that using recreational cannabis may lead people to try "harder" drugs.

It was mentioned that in the United States, the prevalent legal age is 21, mostly harmonizing with their legal drinking age.

The Committee also heard from First Nations and communities close to the Quebec border that "cross border shopping" could be an issue, as it currently is for alcohol, if Quebec's legal age is lower than New Brunswick's.

[Translation]

It is very important that the government involve all stakeholders in dealing with this issue, so that it becomes a social endeavour.

Jean-Guy Levesque

Although most of what the Committee heard focused on youth, some participants cautioned that not all recreational cannabis users will be youth. They suggested that access to educational resources is necessary for all those who will be using recreational cannabis, be they 19 or 90.

Discussion: Youth

Working Group Recommendation

Although the federal government’s *Cannabis Act* sets the age of consumption for recreational cannabis at 18, the medical community is clear that youth under

the age of 25 who choose to consume cannabis incur increased health risks.

What We Heard

Focus on Education

Although many supported a legal age of 19, participants believe particular attention should be given to children and youth up to the age of 25. Participants were unanimous in their calls for education, especially for youth. Regardless of the legal age, the Committee heard that presenters want their children to be able to access information such as health and safety risks of recreational cannabis, usage guidelines and information about impaired driving.

Many participants suggested that public school curriculums should be adjusted to deliver information about cannabis to mirror current alcohol and drug programming. The Committee also heard calls for a community-wide approach to education so that mental health professionals, doctors, law enforcement, teachers, parents and other community-based organizations are empowered to help youth make safe and educated decisions about recreational cannabis.

The Committee heard widespread agreement that education focused on the prevention of drinking and driving is effective. It was suggested that these campaigns be used as a model for similar programs focusing on recreational cannabis.

Access

Although many presenters agree with a legal age of 19, they have concerns about the effects of recreational cannabis on young people. Of particular concern are the possible effects on the developing brain up to the age of 25. The importance of policies encouraging delayed exposure was a frequent theme throughout the public consultations.

Some worry that legalization, in particular the ability to grow up to four plants at home, would make recreational cannabis more accessible to youth and teenagers. Others argue that legalization would decrease youth’s access to cannabis by reducing access to the illegal market supply.

Accessible information about the risk of cannabis use and information about low-risk cannabis use will be key to allowing young adults to make decisions about their health.

New Brunswick
Association of Social Workers

Mental Health

Providing adequate mental health services, particularly for youth and students, was also a common theme. It was suggested that more resources will be needed in schools to help students struggling with mental health and addiction. There was a call for more mental health programs, treatment, and specialists.

Discussion: Growing at Home and Possession Limits

Working Group Recommendation

New Brunswick is able to reduce the limits imposed by the federal government's *Cannabis Act* on the amount of recreational cannabis an adult can legally possess outside the home (30 g), and the personal cultivation of recreational cannabis (four plants per household, maximum 100 cm per plant). The Working Group does not see a benefit in reducing either amount, but recommends the following additional safety measures:

requiring that cannabis grown at home must be kept secure and inaccessible by children or the public, defining "household" as a housing unit that has bathing and kitchen facilities (and therefore excludes a room in a rooming house or in a university residence building or other shared living spaces), and affirming that landlords are free to prohibit the cultivation of recreational cannabis.

What We Heard

Home Growth and Possession

Participants did not take issue with a 30 g personal possession limit, although some, including municipalities and police officers, are concerned with the rules surrounding home growth. It was suggested by some that it may be difficult to enforce the height or the number of plants in a household. Others wondered how police officers would know if plants on a personal property are kept in a secure location inaccessible to children. A few participants proposed that, to aid police officers, persons choosing to cultivate recreational cannabis at home should be licenced.

A few participants were fearful that allowing any home cultivation would only further support organized crime. They also worry that home cultivation would make it easier for youth to access cannabis or for children to accidentally ingest cannabis products.

In light of these issues, municipalities asked if they will be able to regulate home growth, possession, and location of production facilities in their own communities.

Definition of Household

The Committee heard from participants that the definition of "household" used to determine home cultivation limits must be clear and free of loopholes. Some worry high-density housing, particularly with non-nuclear family arrangements, may be a problem for law enforcement. Others are concerned that possessing multiple properties, such as a house and a cottage, could complicate the definition of household. Participants also agreed that landlords should have the right to prohibit cannabis growth on their property.

We need to be careful with [what is intended to be for personal use] and make sure that we have the appropriate balance between the personal freedom to make the product that people want to consume and it not becoming a business opportunity as well.

Ken Forest

Discussion: Public Safety

Working Group Recommendation

As proposed, the federal Bill C-46 would allow police officers to conduct roadside saliva tests, which if positive, will be followed by blood tests. The Bill would

establish impairment at a blood content of 5 ng/ml of THC or a combination of 2.5 ng/ml THC with a blood alcohol content higher than 0.05.

What We Heard

Let me be clear. Using marijuana is a health risk.
New Brunswick Medical Society

Detection

Some participants are concerned about the long elimination half-life of THC in the body and the risk of false positives for impairment tests. They noted that current technology can detect THC levels but cannot detect impairment. They suggested that until the relationship between THC levels and impairment is better understood, employers and police officers are faced with detection and enforcement challenges that place workers and drivers at serious health and safety risks.

Impairment at Work

Case law authorizes employers to require employees to be unimpaired at work. In practice, there are many challenges, including prescription medication effects, addiction and determining when it is legal to test employees.

Canada should adopt a workplace alcohol and drug testing regulatory framework to ensure safety is not compromised by legalizing marijuana.
J.D. Irving Limited

Some presenters expressed concern about their limited ability to detect cannabis impairment at work. In addition to the issues caused by the distinction between impairment and THC levels, employers indicated they want clear guidelines about when they are able to test their employees. The Committee heard that, particularly in industries with heavy machinery and transportation, employers want the ability to perform random testing on employees to ensure their safety and the safety of others around them. This also applies to learning institutions such as college trade workshops.

Presenters expressed that their recreational or medical usage on their own time could affect their jobs if better methods of detection are not introduced.

Can my employer legally subject me to cannabis drug tests? Obtaining [answers to this] and other questions is imperative for the health and safety of our workers across New Brunswick.
Canadian Union of Public Employees,
New Brunswick

Impaired Driving

Police officers and participants expressed concerns about the efficacy of detection methods to apprehend cannabis-impaired drivers. There is widespread agreement that impaired driving is a serious issue and that law enforcement must be properly equipped to detect and prosecute people who drive under the influence of cannabis.

Discussion: Economic Development

Working Group Recommendation

The legalization of recreational cannabis presents an economic opportunity for New Brunswick. Cannabis production, research and development could result in more jobs and significant economic opportunities.

The Working Group noted that economic opportunism coupled with sound social policies could bring significant benefits to New Brunswick.

What We Heard

Production Opportunities

A large number of presenters see cannabis production as an economic opportunity. They are looking forward to welcoming legal producers to their region, particularly because of the prospect of job creation in the province. Many are also hopeful that recreational cannabis production will generate auxiliary jobs in fields such as marketing, communication, information technology, research and testing.

Speaking last night with one of our young people with a master's degree in science who previously may not have seen many opportunities in the region, they now say: There is an opportunity for me at home.

Chief Darcy Gray

Although licencing falls under the federal Department of Health, some people suggested that the provincial government and cannabis retailers should support small producers, including helping small illegal producers transition into the legal market. Small cannabis producers were likened to craft beer producers that can provide a larger variety of recreational cannabis products and diverse supply. This is also understood by some as a way to keep profits in the province and in the hands of small business owners.

Potency

Several participants suggested that THC potency limits would only serve to fuel the illicit market to

produce more concentrated products. Entrepreneurs suggested that too many limits on products would stifle creativity and innovation in the field. Others cautioned that imposing potency limits may help discourage overconsumption and mitigate health risks.

First Nations

First Nations communities welcome the opportunity to participate in a new and growing market. Some are already offering courses to members of their community to help them become candidates for work in cannabis production facilities.

First Nations representatives expressed confusion by the lack of reference to Aboriginal Law in the Working Group's report. They also told the Committee they want to know how their government and communities will be affected so they can pursue relevant social programming and economic benefits.

[Training] is essential, and it is imperative.

Derek Riedle

Invest in Training

Many believe that the labour market is not equipped for the demands of recreational cannabis sale and production. The Committee heard calls for the development of training programs for retail workers and potential producers. It was suggested that post-secondary institutions offer training to work in the cannabis industry.

Discussion: Revenue and Expenditure

Working Group Recommendation

The legalization of recreational cannabis may create new tax revenues for the Province of New Brunswick, provided a provincial regulatory framework and retail model are in place by July 1, 2018. However,

legalization may also result in new costs such as administration, compliance, enforcement, health care, and education and awareness.

What We Heard

Supply

Many people are fearful that there will be a significant supply shortage when recreational cannabis is legalized as there are not enough legal producers to fulfill the projected demand. If confronted with inadequate supply, users may revert to the illegal market and affect provincial tax revenues. Some suggested that, regardless of the retail model, the retailer should initiate relationships and contracts with suppliers as quickly as possible to ensure New Brunswickers have a safe legal supply available on July 1, 2018. Producers told the Committee that in order to grow an appropriate supply for New Brunswick's projected demand, they will need to be advised as soon as possible on any regulations regarding THC content as well as any other production considerations.

Smoke Free Places Act

The Committee heard widespread agreement that cannabis should not be consumed in public. The Province has already enacted amendments to include cannabis under the *Smoke Free Places Act*. Presenters noted that there is still a problem with smoking cigarettes in public, leading them to expect the same with cannabis. Therefore, participants urged stronger enforcement, especially for cannabis, given its strong smell and the possibility of "second-hand highs".

Revenue Sharing with Municipalities

Many municipalities are concerned about the costs they may incur through the legalization of recreational cannabis. Some believe enforcement costs will go up, particularly if there is an opportunity to enact bylaws restricting certain aspects of recreational cannabis consumption and growth. They are also concerned that without revenue sharing, municipalities will not be able to enforce provincial and municipal laws.

[Translation]

For me, social responsibility starts with education.

Claude R. Losier

Education

Participants agreed that education is key to developing healthy attitudes toward recreational cannabis. The Committee heard that the legalization of recreational cannabis comes with a responsibility to educate New Brunswickers, particularly children and youth, about the risks of recreational consumption. Participants expressed concern that legalization should not lead to normalization and feel that education campaigns, both in and outside schools, would help mitigate this risk. Many believe that education could reduce early consumption.

Appendix A:

Motion to Establish the Select Committee

MOTION 31

WHEREAS there is an apparent shift in public attitudes towards the use of cannabis;

WHEREAS over the course of the last decade cannabis use has been the subject of discussion in several forums;

WHEREAS the questions of cannabis access and use is important, sensitive and complex, with issues and implications spanning health, public safety, and social and criminal justice policy domains;

WHEREAS it is important to strike an appropriate balance between legalizing cannabis for recreational use without promoting its use by New Brunswickers;

WHEREAS addressing legalization requires input from all sectors and New Brunswickers in order to shape the best long-term approach for New Brunswick;

WHEREAS the provincial government is pleased to partner with the Trudeau government to fulfill their commitment to Canadians to provide a safe legal framework for recreational cannabis use;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the House appoint a Select Committee on Cannabis that will be charged with the responsibility of conducting public consultations, in relation to an interim report of the provincial working group on cannabis to be deposited with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on or before June 15, 2017 and deemed referred to the committee, and reporting to the House with a summary of public consultations on the interim report;

MOTION 31

attendu qu'a eu lieu un changement manifeste dans l'attitude du public à l'égard de l'usage du cannabis ;

attendu que, au cours de la dernière décennie, l'usage du cannabis a fait l'objet de discussions au sein de plusieurs forums ;

attendu que les questions de l'accès au cannabis et de l'usage de celui-ci sont importantes, délicates et complexes, présentant des enjeux et ayant une incidence sur les politiques touchant les domaines de la santé, de la sécurité publique et de la justice sociale et pénale ;

attendu qu'il est important de trouver un équilibre approprié pour que la légalisation du cannabis aux fins de la consommation récréative n'ait pas pour effet d'en promouvoir l'usage auprès des gens du Nouveau-Brunswick ;

attendu que l'examen de la légalisation nécessite l'apport de tous les secteurs et de la population du Nouveau-Brunswick afin de façonner la meilleure approche à long terme pour le Nouveau-Brunswick ;

attendu que le gouvernement provincial est content de nouer un partenariat avec le gouvernement Trudeau afin de respecter l'engagement envers les Canadiens de fournir, pour la consommation récréative du cannabis, un cadre juridique sûr ;

qu'il soit à ces causes résolu que la Chambre constitue un Comité spécial sur le cannabis, chargé de mener des consultations publiques relativement à un rapport provisoire du groupe de travail provincial sur le cannabis, devant être déposé auprès du greffier de l'Assemblée législative au plus tard le 15 juin 2017 et réputé avoir été renvoyé au comité, et de déposer à la Chambre un résumé des consultations publiques relatives au rapport provisoire ;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT in addition to the powers traditionally conferred upon the said committee by the Standing Rules, the committee shall have the following additional powers:

- to meet during sittings of the House and during the recess after prorogation until the following session;
- to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient;
- to retain such personnel and expertise as may be required to assist the committee;
- to hold such public consultations as it deems necessary;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, during a period when the Legislative Assembly is adjourned or prorogued, the committee may release a report by depositing a copy with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and, upon the resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present the report to the Legislative Assembly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the said committee be composed of Mr. Bourque, Mr. LePage, Mr. Chiasson, Ms. LeBlanc, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Wetmore, Ms. Dubé and Ms. Lynch.

que, investi des pouvoirs traditionnellement conférés en vertu du Règlement, le comité soit aussi habilité :

- à siéger pendant les séances de la Chambre et après la prorogation, jusqu'à la session suivante ;
- à tenir séance à divers endroits, au besoin ;
- à s'adjoindre le personnel et les spécialistes-conseils qu'il requiert ;
- à tenir les consultations publiques qu'il estime nécessaires ;

que, si l'Assemblée législative est ajournée ou prorogée, le comité soit habilité à rendre public un rapport par le dépôt d'un exemplaire au bureau du greffier de l'Assemblée législative, lequel rapport, après la rentrée parlementaire, sera présenté à l'Assemblée législative par la présidence du comité

et que le comité soit composé de M. Bourque, de M. LePage, de M. Chiasson, de M^{me} LeBlanc, de M. Harvey, de M. Wetmore, de M^{me} Dubé et de M^{me} Lynch.

Appendix B:

List of Public Hearing Participants and Written Briefs Submitted

Access to Medical Marijuana	City of Saint John
AIE	Civilized
Arthritis Society of Canada and Canadians for Fair	Clark, David
Association Cannabis Canada	Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick
Audet, Valmond-Marc	Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick inc.
Bérubé, Francis	Cyr, Dick
Boudreau, Amanda	Désilets, Mélanie
Boudreau, David	DeVillaer, Michael
Boudreau, Kenneth	Diotte, Dwight
Boudreau, Roxanna	Donahue, Jim
Boulter, Louise	Doucette, Peter
Boulter, Robert	Dufour, Marcel
Campbellton Regional Chamber of Commerce	Dunnett, Cathy
Canadian Cancer Society	Farmer, Autumn
Canadian Federation of Independent Business	Fenity, Stephen
Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association Inc.	Gagnon, Éric
Canadian Medical Cannabis Council	Gallant, Danny
Canadian Union of Public Employees	Gerhardt, Elizabeth
Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 963	Glode, Dalton
Canadian Union of Public Employees, New Brunswick	Grand Falls Central Business Development Corporation
CBDC Restigouche	Gray, Peter
Chantler, Crystal	HBB Medical Inc.
Child, Youth and Senior Advocate, New Brunswick	IHS Heating Systems
City of Fredericton	Insurance Bureau of Canada
City of Moncton	

International Herbs Medical Marijuana Ltd.	Planning Directors of Municipalities and Regional Service Commissions
J.D. Irving, Limited	Potgieter, Hermanus
Jones, Daphne	Privateer Holdings
Kingsclear First Nation	Public Health Association of NB and PEI
LeBlanc, Charlotte	Retail Council of Canada
Lemaire, Earl	Rideout , Chris
Listuguj Education	Robb, John
Listuguj Government	Russell, David
Loomer, Jennifer	Savoie-Perron, Alexandre
Losier, Claude R.	Simpson, Andrew
Manzer, Lawrence	Steeves, Chris
Maritime Vapor	Steeves, Dan
Martin, Luc	Stewart, Pam
Mills, Stewart	Strek, Basia
Modern Hemp Innovations Inc.	Taylor, Petrea
NB Trauma Program	Thomas, Angela
New Brunswick Association of Planners	Tilray
New Brunswick Association of Social Workers	Trevors, Robert
New Brunswick Medical Society	Vasseur, Steve
New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association	Vend Data Media Solutions
NICHE	Village of Atholville
OrganiGram Inc.	Village of Bathurst
Parrott, Matthew	Villeneuve, Denis
Paul, Beaver	WorkSafeNB
	Zenabis LP

Appendix C:

Medical Cannabis, Edibles and Industrial Hemp

The federal government has signaled its intention to continue to operate a distinct medical cannabis framework following the recommendations of the Taskforce on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation.

Although medical cannabis does not fall under the purview of the provincial government, many presenters expressed concerns to the Select Committee.

What We Heard

Price

The Committee heard that many medical cannabis users have difficulty paying for their medicine. Some recommended that cannabis be available tax free for medical patients while others would like to see it covered by provincial health care.

Impairment

Many medical users are concerned with proposed impairment laws. They indicated that medicinal cannabis does not necessarily leave them impaired. Some strains contain very little THC, for example. Some suggested different limits for impairment for medical users.

Access

Patients found that current access to legal and safe medical cannabis is difficult. The Committee heard that specific strains are often sold out and that minimum order quantities and poor information on strains means a high initial cost for patients. Patients also said that online medical cannabis retailers and distributors require a credit card, which is prohibitive for some.

Dispensaries were found to be a better option for some medical cannabis users. They appreciate speaking to knowledgeable staff and valued being able to see, touch, and smell the cannabis. They also value the ability to walk out with their prescription. The Committee heard widespread agreement among medical patients that they do not want to purchase their medication in a recreational retail environment.

Some were also concerned that recreational cannabis legalization would jeopardize the supply of medical cannabis.

Medical Professionals

The Committee heard that although some medical professionals are very knowledgeable about cannabis, many are not. Some patients said their family doctors are uncomfortable prescribing cannabis as they do not have enough information on its effects, strains and dosages. They suggested that more training for doctors and nurses would make it easier for those seeking treatment to get information and medication.

Research

More research is needed before the medical community can fully understand the benefits and risks of cannabis. Some medical cannabis users suggest government leadership as well as revenues from cannabis sales are needed to generate research as quickly as possible.

Edibles

Although the federal government is not legalizing the sale of edibles on July 1, 2018, many participants said they would like edibles to be available for purchase at retail outlets. Some, particularly medical users, prefer to ingest cannabis without smoking. The Committee also heard concern about edible products being attractive to children. The medical community urged government to regulate packaging and ban edible products that are attractive to children, such as gummy bears.

Industrial Hemp

The Committee heard from hemp producers who disagree that their products are labelled as cannabis products. Hemp producers told the Committee that because hemp plants contain less than 0.3% THC, they should not be included in cannabis legislation or policy. These producers showcased the substantial agricultural and value-added economic opportunities of hemp for the province.