



Fri 3 Nov 2023



Subject: Support for the Legalising Cannabis Bill 2023

**I am writing on behalf of Plant Playground to express our strong support for the Legalising Cannabis Bill 2023. This legislation is a significant step towards a more enlightened and progressive approach to cannabis regulation, and we believe it holds the potential for positive changes in our society.**

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One of the key aspects of the bill that we wholeheartedly support is the provision for cannabis sales through cannabis cafes and dispensaries. Our organisation has been deeply involved in the plant-based wellness space for years, and we have personally sacrificed a great deal to establish our Hydroponic Concept store. We have long aspired to transition into a thriving cannabis cafe or dispensary, given the incredible support we have received from our community.

Our Hydroponic Concept store has already successfully functioned as a cafe, and it has garnered immense support from the community. People are eager to learn hydroponic gardening techniques to grow their own fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, and micro-greens at home. There is a growing demand for safe and responsible access to cannabis as a plant-based alternative, and it makes sense to include cannabis in the list of plants individuals can grow at home. Cannabis can play a vital role in promoting sustainable, climate-positive practices, and it should be readily available to individuals who seek its numerous benefits.

The provision in the bill to allow individuals to grow up to six cannabis plants at home is a positive step forward. This limit strikes a balance between personal use and responsible cultivation, and it can potentially encourage responsible consumption and mitigate the black market.

Furthermore, the bill's endorsement of people making edibles at home from cannabis they have grown or bought for personal use aligns with the principles of personal autonomy and responsible use.

We also express our support for the proposed Responsible Service of Cannabis scheme, which would require cafe staff to undergo training to ensure the safety of patrons.

Responsible service and education are key components of any substance-related legislation and are vital in minimising potential harms.

Moreover, we support the creation of a new agency, the Cannabis Australia National Agency (CANA), to manage licensing and sales. This agency would play a pivotal role in ensuring the responsible and safe distribution of cannabis products.

We strongly support the bill's proposal for labelling strength, strain, purity, and other relevant information at the point of sale, which CANA could require. Truth in labelling would bring cannabis products into the 21st century and align them with other controlled substances like alcohol. Clear and concise labelling, with easily understandable language, is essential to provide consumers with the information they need to make informed choices about their cannabis products.

We do acknowledge the bill's recognition of possible risks associated with cannabis and alcohol products being sold within the same venue. We would insist that there be opportunities for those venues holding licenses that allow them to sell alcohol, such as a

small bar license, to explore a cannabis license, allowing for new business opportunities within this exciting space.

Our small business is currently exploring a small bar license purely to demonstrate precedence and a successful working history in relation to responsibly serving a restricted substance. We hope that this would demonstrate community due diligence and be seen as an advancement along the pathway to becoming a cannabis cafe or dispensary. We strongly advocate for specialist programs and training for such transitions. We hope that the bill speaks to the possible options for small businesses looking to transition between certain licenses. Ideally, it will be seen as positive groundwork and not a penalty or barrier to entry into the cannabis industry.

Furthermore, we support a free license scheme for First Nations people in recognition of the unfair impact of the war on drugs on their communities. It is our belief that such a scheme can contribute to rectifying historical injustices and providing economic opportunities to First Nations communities.

In conclusion, we urge you to consider the potential benefits of the Legalising Cannabis Bill 2023 and the positive impact it can have on individuals, businesses, and the broader community. We believe that this bill represents a sensible, responsible, and forward-thinking approach to cannabis regulation. Your support for this bill will mark a significant step toward a more open and inclusive society where the needs of individuals can be met through plant-based alternatives.

Thank you for considering our viewpoint and the opportunity to express our support for this bill. We are willing to contribute further to this important conversation and help ensure that cannabis regulation benefits our community.

Kind regards,

Sasha Lai

Director

Plant Playground, Biophilic Concept Space & Hydroponic Plant Cafe

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