



Benjamin Mutti &lt;bjmutt@gmail.com&gt;

## Testimony on Bellville Dispensary Benjamin Mutti

1 message

Benjamin Mutti &lt;bjmutt@gmail.com&gt;

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To: Civic Council BEL JJ Burkhart <jjburkhart.bellville.oh@gmail.com>, Civic Council BEL Debra Carver <debcarver.bellville.oh@gmail.com>, Civic Council BEL Ian Ball <ian.ball.bellvillevc@gmail.com>, Civic Council BEL Jason Guiliams <jasonguiliams.bellville.oh@gmail.com>, Civic Council BEL Tim Truex <timtruex.bellville.oh@gmail.com>, Civic Council BEL Justin Enix <justinenix.bellvilleohio@gmail.com>

# Testimony opposing cannabis

My name is Benjamin Mutti. I am a +40-year resident of Richland County. Since the announcement that the Village Planning Commission was considering approving a marijuana dispensary, a growing list of area governing bodies have prohibited commercial cannabis in their jurisdictions: the municipalities of Ashland, Lexington, Shelby, and the townships of Washington, Monroe, Madison, Bloomingrove, Springfield, and Weller. I am requesting the Village Councils of Bellville and Butler both pass ordinances prohibiting commercial cannabis in their respective jurisdictions based on the following:

The Marijuana Industry and its syndicates wrote the text of Issue 2 which recently became part of the Ohio Revised Code. With its own admission, the Marijuana Industry acknowledges in law that legalizing marijuana will bring more addiction and substance abuse, will bring more impaired motorists, will allow children to have more access to marijuana, and will adversely impact mental health. And in fact, one notable key Cannabis CEO admits the Marijuana Industry currently helps fuel the Black Market. For clarification, I am not saying this, the Marijuana Industry is saying this.

It behooves me to think, how can a marijuana business be considered a community partner and a good neighbor, when they are neither accountable to GOD nor to man nor to their own words?

**1) I agree with the Cannabis Industry when they admit marijuana will bring more addiction and substance abuse.**

Section 3780.30 (A) & (B) of the Ohio Revised Code says “The division of cannabis control shall enter into an agreement with the department of mental health and addiction services under which the department shall provide a program for cannabis addiction services.”

1 in 6 people will have marijuana addiction. The cannabis industry knows this, that is why large sums of money will be going into addiction services. In fact, there is considerable evidence from studies that regular cannabis use predicts increased risk of schizophrenia and of psychotic symptoms.

**2) I agree with the Cannabis Industry when they admit marijuana will bring more impaired motorists.**

Section 3780.33 (E) of the Ohio Revised Code says, “Notwithstanding any conflicting provision of the Ohio Revised Code, when an adult use consumer engages in activities related to adult use cannabis in compliance with this chapter, such activities alone do not constitute sufficient basis for conducting a field sobriety test on the individual or for suspending the individual’s driver’s license. To conduct any field sobriety test, a law enforcement officer must have an independent, factual basis giving reasonable suspicion that the individual is operating a vehicle under the influence of adult use cannabis or with a prohibited concentration of marijuana in the person's whole blood, blood serum, plasma, breath, or urine.

Standard Wellness CEO Jared Maloof’s company, which is proposing a weed dispensary in our Village of Bellville, owns The Forest Dispensary in Sandusky, Ohio. We were able to track the number of cases involving motorists arrested for Operating vehicle while intoxicated (OVI’s) from the year before the weed dispensary opened on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to the latest numbers from last year. This OVI chart is based on data provided by the Sandusky, Ohio Police Department: 185 cases in 2018, 178 cases in 2019, 169 cases in 2020, 243 cases in 2021, 353 cases in 2022, and 345 cases in 2023.

The Sandusky Police Department quit tracking marijuana offenses after 2019. Interesting the Department would quit tracking marijuana offenses after a marijuana dispensary comes to town.

Nevertheless, AAA states on its website that “There is no level of marijuana safe for driving.”

”Cannabis and Driving,” AAA Exchange <https://exchange.aaa.com/safety/substance-impaired-driving/cannabis-driving/>

This week on Tuesday I spoke with one of the two area Amish Bishops who were a part of the clergy letter signed by local clergymen representing sixty-six congregations opposing the proposal to bring a weed dispensary to the 97/71 interchange in Bellville. This Bishop told me he was gravely concerned with the prospects of more impaired motorists on the road that could potentially collide with his Amish Community’s horse and buggies. He was lamenting this month’s Wisconsin accident where a tractor trailer smashed into a van killing seven Amish family members visiting from out of town. The Bishop estimates there are close to 300 in the local Amish Community and Bellville-Johnsville Road, which comes off of State Route 97, is a main thoroughfare for the Amish.

Not only will the Amish be wary of a weed dispensary, bikers and joggers on the B&O Bike Trail just one mile down the road will also be impacted.

**3) I agree with the Cannabis Industry when they admit marijuana will allow children to have more access to marijuana.**

Section 3780.33 of the Ohio Revised Code says “Unless there is clear and convincing evidence that a child is unsafe, the use, possession, or administration of adult use cannabis in accordance with this chapter shall not be the sole or primary basis for any

of the following: An adjudication under section 2151.28 of the Revised Code determining that a child is an abused, neglected," etc.....

Since the medical marijuana opened its doors in 2019, the number of accidental poisonings in kids has increased 20-fold.

"Edible poisonings among kids growing in Ohio, could worsen with recreational legalization," <https://nbc24.com/news/local/2-colerain-middle-school-students-hospitalized-eating-cannabis-infused-gummies-weed-pot-marijuana-edibles-ate-hospital-safety-health-student-teachers-police-ems-northwest-schools-district-code-conduct-illegal-prohibited>

In 2021, a Lexington female student admitted to stealing the THC gummies from her father, who had a prescription for them. She ate one gummy on the school bus and gave one to another girl, who also ate it. She had taken marijuana cigarettes from her father three times a week for a month.

"Lexington Jr. High students allegedly ingest THC gummies on school bus" <https://www.richlandsource.com/2021/12/22/lexington-jr-high-students-allegedly-ingest-thc-gummies-on-school-bus/>

In 2016, the local Butler Ohio Dreams event involved twenty concert-goers being transported by ambulance to the emergency room for consuming THC candy that came from a registered medical marijuana card owner from Michigan who was licensed to possess, grow or be prescribed marijuana.

"Arrest made in connection with drug-laced candy at Ohio Dreams," <https://www.richlandsource.com/2016/08/07/arrest-made-in-connection-with-drug-laced-candy-at-ohio-dreams/>

The harmful effect on young people's minds is well-documented and contributes to lower academic achievement and juvenile delinquency. This is why Clear Fork School Board passed a non-binding resolution this past Tuesday. They wrote, "The Board Members of the Clear Fork Valley Local School District have resolved that it is in our students' best interests to support the prohibition of any business in the boundaries of our school district that cultivates, processes, or retails marijuana. We believe that by supporting this prohibition, we are preserving and protecting our community's exemplary quality of life and the health and safety of our students."

A marijuana dispensary in Bellville would fly in the face of the random drug testing program implemented by Clear Fork Schools for grades 9-12 that started in 2014. At the school board meeting Tuesday night, Principal Brian Brown told me the drug-testing program was one of the best things to happen to the school district in his distinguished thirty-two years.

Tragically this past summer, a Cuyahoga County teenager was convicted of four counts of murder after intentionally driving her car 100 mph into a wall and killing her boyfriend and acquaintance. She had been smoking marijuana. Will Village Council back our children into a wall when they allow a dispensary to come to our area instead of prohibiting this poison?

"Ohio teen murdered boyfriend, friend by deliberately crashing car at 100 mph: 'Literal hell on wheels' <https://nypost.com/2023/08/16/teen-murdered-boyfriend-friend-by-crashing-car-at-100-mph/>

**4) I agree with the Cannabis Industry when they admit marijuana will adversely impact mental health.**

Section 3780.23 (C)(3) of the Ohio Revised Code says Twenty-five percent of the revenue received from the adult-use tax goes to the substance abuse and addiction fund is to support the efforts of the department of mental health and addiction services to alleviate substance and opiate abuse.

Refer to diagram #2

Research has shown a strong connection between marijuana-use and extremely violent actions, such as attacks in school. For example, in “Protecting America’s Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence,” nearly half of all attackers had a history of substance abuse, and marijuana was the substance most frequently abused. (p.27)

In 2012, T.J. Lane, age 19, shot and killed three students and injured three more at Chardon High School, in Geauga County, and had seven violations while in jail, including marijuana use and self-mutilation “School Shooter T.J. Lane’s Prison Time Included Drugs, Segregation,” <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/crime-courts/school-shooter-t-j-lanes-prison-time-included-drugs-segregation-n204496>

On April 20,1999 the ill-famed Columbine Massacre in Colorado occurred where thirteen people were murdered while at school. One of the shooters (Dylan Klebold) admitted to using marijuana. This is where the hellish “420” number which is synonymous with pot-smoking is associated with.

The Journal of Missouri State Medical Association has an article on Cannabis and the violent crime surge. The Uvalde school shooter complained that his grandmother would not let him smoke weed. Other examples include the 2016 Mass shooter at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, the 2017 mass shooter at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, the 2018 mass shooter at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida were all reported to be marijuana users,” this study says. With youth consuming more frequent and higher doses of THC, this is leading to more addiction and anti-social behavior.

“Cannabis and the Violent Crime Surge,” National Library of Medicine  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9462911/>

“The concerning and disturbing link between marijuana use, shootings, mass violence,”  
<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/1350617/the-concerning-and-disturbing-link-between-marijuana-use-shootings-mass-violence/>

We cannot forget marijuana’s destructive force on the family when in 2016, eight family members from Pike County, Ohio were murdered execution-style, having marijuana growing operations on the premises of three of the four crime scenes. Just four years earlier, Pike County had a major marijuana grow site raided with suspected ties to the Mexican drug cartel.

Recent current events confirm this pattern between marijuana and poor mental health. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a student wickedly punched a sixty-year old Colerain High School teacher in the head multiple times; the toxicology report found a trace of THC. Other students saw the perpetrator consuming edibles prior to the assault. Part of the teacher’s skull had to be removed after the 16-year-old student violently attacked her.

“Ohio school district addresses THC after student allegedly punches teacher in head,”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRoiWK7Wy9A>

In January 2024, a California judge ruled that Bryn Spejcher, who was convicted of fatally stabbing her boyfriend 108 times in a cannabis-induced psychotic episode received a sentence of probation instead. One would assume this gives everyone in the State of California who smokes marijuana a license to kill.

“California woman who got high and stabbed boyfriend 108 times will not go to prison, judge rules,” <https://www.foxnews.com/us/california-woman-got-high-stabbed-boyfriend-108-times-not-go-prison-judge-rules>

**5) I agree with Standard Wellness CEO Jared Maloof when he called for a ban on hemp-derived Delta 8 sales in Ohio.**

Cannabis CEO Jared Maloof testified to an Ohio Senate Committee on March 7, 2023 saying: “Some of the things that we should focus on are as follows: Put a stop to hemp derived Delta 8 and other related cannabinoid sales in the state. It is quite surprising that neither the legislative branch nor the executive branch have taken action here. The status quo is that children can purchase THC at their local gas station and parents across this state have no idea that it is happening.”

These Delta 8 products became popular in late 2020, coming onto the market through a loophole in the 2018 Farm Bill that allowed for the farming and sale of hemp, a cannabis plant with low THC.

‘A false sense of security’: Experts say delta-8 THC products can still be dangerous,” <https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/09/health/delta-8-thc-cannabis-wellness/index.html>

According to the Utah Controlled Substance Act, it is illegal to sell or possess Delta 8 products in the State of Utah.

“DELTA 8 THC IN UTAH: IS IT LEGAL & WHERE TO BUY IN 2023?” <https://area52.com/delta-8-thc-utah/>

Interestingly, according to the Utah Bee, “Even though technically illegal in the state, you can still find Delta-8 and other novel cannabinoids, Delta 9, and HHC, in storefronts, gas stations, online and neighboring states, such as Wyoming. Moreover, two medical cannabis companies in Utah (STANDARD WELLNESS, and Zion’s Medicinal) have been making Delta-8 based products available for patients since the opening of their dispensaries.”

The Legal Loophole of Delta 8 in Utah — The Utah Bee, <https://www.theutahbee.com/the-utah-bee/the-legal-loophole-of-delta-8-in-utah>

That’s right, Cannabis CEO Jared Maloof’s company, Standard Wellness, has a dispensary in Utah and sells Watermelon Toub O’Gummies (425 mg) and High-dose Cherry Gummies (175 mg) which are blended products designed with Delta 8 THC ingredient. Jared Maloof’s Standard Wellness also sells a D8/D9 Blended Distillate Pax Era Pod, Vape <https://www.iheartjane.com/products/620240/standard-wellness-lifter>

Correct me if I am wrong, but I thought Jared Maloof was calling for a ban on Delta 8 products in Ohio? I thought Jared Maloof was concerned for the health of children?

Maybe he is more concerned about making a profit; his testimony was so compassionate though.

In addition to the Utah dispensary, Standard Wellness started Forest Wellness in Springfield, Ohio located at 1711 W. Main Street after it bought out disgraced Pure Ohio Wellness. This was shortly after one of the owners, Ms. Maria K. Bowlin, was arrested for the theft without consent of a Blueberry THC gummy package. (Case number 2020-00019268) The other medical marijuana dispensary located in Springfield, Ohio, managed by Terrasana Labs, was fined \$100,000 and had an employee lose its license for stealing marijuana.

Ohio medical marijuana program: How many doctors, dispensaries, patients have been sanctioned? <https://www.daytondailynews.com/local/ohio-medical-marijuana-program-how-many-doctors-dispensaries-patients-have-been-sanctioned/EHP6QKPRRRBBHKWKIJNPBQGOSA/>

Refer to diagram #3

**6) I agree with Standard Wellness CEO Jared Maloof when he says that the Cannabis Industry helps fuel the illegal black market.**

Standard Wellness CEO Jared Maloof testified to an Ohio Senate Committee on March 7, 2023 and let the cat out of the bag saying: “In many states where there is an overproduction of supply, and businesses struggle, operators are faced with difficult choices. Some make good decisions and take capacity offline. Others make bad decisions and decide to sell into the illegal market. We have seen several times that otherwise good people who have never broken a law in their lives are deciding in droves to sell legally-produced marijuana into the illegal market.

This is an astonishing admission. Mr. Maloof is confessing some of his industry’s dispensaries are fueling the black market and operating as a criminal enterprise. Perhaps this is why both Richland County Sheriff Steve Sheldon, and the Project Director Keith Porch of METRICH, the largest decentralized drug enforcement unit in the state, both oppose any commercial cannabis coming to Richland County.

In 2022, Jared Maloof’s fellow colleague, Ohio-based Ancient Roots CEO and Founder David Haley, had his employee license revoked in 2022 by the Ohio Department of Commerce for giving out free samples of medical marijuana products to non-medical marijuana users. Haley also falsified data in his company’s inventory system by reporting the marijuana given out was still in the company’s processing store. “Get Your Free Weed Samples Here! - How One CEO Lost His Job by Giving Away Free Cannabis Samples,” <https://cannabis.net/blog/news/get-your-free-weed-samples-here-how-one-ceo-lost-his-job-by-giving-away-free-cannabis-samples>

Mr. Maloof does not appear to want accountability. Perhaps this is why the State of Ohio filed a lawsuit against his company in 2022 when his company did not provide records when compelled to do so by state regulators.

“State v. Standard Wellness Co.,” <https://casetext.com/case/state-v-standard-wellnessco#:~:text=%7B%C2%B6%201%7D%20Appellant%20Standard%20Wellness,documents%20pursuant%20to%20board%20subpoena>.

In closing, Scripture instructs all of us that you cannot serve both GOD and money. It is either one or the other. It is my hope that Mr. Maloof can agree with this statement and choose right. All of us need a Savior, and one of the ways Village Council can help save our community is to prohibit commercial cannabis in village limits. 60% of Bellville citizens opposed Issue 2 legalization of marijuana in this past Fall’s general election. Maybe Village Council can follow through with the citizens they serve and prohibit commercial cannabis.

4 attachments

Standard Wellness CEO Jared Maloof testimony to Ohio Senate Committee on March 7, 2023:

"In many states where there is an overproduction of supply, and businesses struggle, operators are faced with difficult choices. Some make good decisions and take capacity offline. Others make bad decisions and decide to sell into the illegal market. We have seen several times that otherwise good people who have never broken a law in their lives are deciding **IN DROVES** to sell legally produced marijuana into the illegal market."

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3077K

2019 U.S. SECRET SERVICE ANALYSIS OF TARGETED SCHOOL VIOLENCE examining targeted attacks against K-12 schools in the United States between 2008-2017:

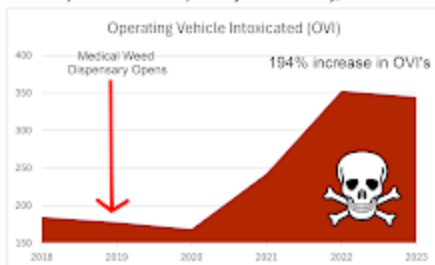
"Of the 35 attackers in this study, half of the attackers had a history of substance use and/or abuse."



school pot.png  
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The most frequently used substances included marijuana (40%)"

Impact of Weed Dispensary on Sandusky, Ohio



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