

# CANNRA

## CANNABIS REGULATORS ASSOCIATION

This statement is in response to the Letter to the Editor authored by Jane Allen entitled, “*The Cannabis Regulators Association in Moving in the Right Direction, but Still Permitting Too Much Tobacco Industry Influence*” and published in *Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research* online on June 26, 2024. **The letter slanders the Cannabis Regulators Association (CANNRA) and contains false and misleading accusations.**

CANNRA is an ethical and nonpartisan, education-based government association that convenes and supports government agencies involved in cannabis and cannabinoid regulation across more than 45 states and U.S. territories, Canada, and the Netherlands. **CANNRA does not take funding from the tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceutical, or cannabis industries, nor do those industries advise CANNRA in any way. Our members are all government agencies and, unlike many government associations, we do not accept memberships or sponsorships from any industry or non-governmental groups.** Ms. Allen's accusations about CANNRA giving the Coalition for Cannabis Policy, Education, and Regulation (CPEAR), or any other industry group, undue influence on cannabis policy are demonstrably false.

The accusations in the Letter to the Editor are based on the CPEAR Center of Excellence's attendance at CANNRA's recent External Stakeholder Meeting. The meeting, which seeks to bring together a range of perspectives on national and international cannabis regulatory issues, had 100 regulators from more than 30 jurisdictions, as well as nearly 200 external stakeholders who registered from more than 100 different organizations that included public health and safety organizations, prevention groups, advocacy groups, non-governmental associations, standards organizations, trade associations, research universities, law firms, and consulting organizations. Meeting registration was open to the public and posted on [CANNRA's website](#). As part of the registration, attendees self-certified that they were not attending as a representative of the tobacco, alcohol, or pharmaceutical industry. To our knowledge, we are the only non-partisan organization to require a self-certification process like this.

**Any accusation that we set criteria for attendance at our meeting and then violated those criteria is false.** We did not disregard our attendance criteria; we took them seriously and reached out to confirm self-certification by a number of attendees. One attendee registered from the CPEAR Center of Excellence and we reached out to verify that the attendee stood by their self-certification as meeting the attendance criteria. The attendee stood by that self-certification, noting distinctions between CPEAR's role and membership and that of the Center for Excellence, which they noted was walled off from CPEAR and had researchers and non-governmental experts as part of their membership. As part of this outreach, CANNRA also identified registrants who clarified they did not meet the attendance criteria, which resulted in cancellation of those registrations.

All of the attendees at the CANNRA External Stakeholder Meeting self-certified to meet the attendance criteria we set out. Furthermore, **any suggestion that one attendee (that Ms. Allen believes to represent the tobacco industry despite the attendee reporting otherwise) in an annual meeting of nearly 200 external stakeholders amounts to undue influence is absurd.**

CANNRA is proud of the work it does to support government agencies regulating cannabis, cannabinoids, and hemp. This work includes, but is not limited to, creating an environment in which government members can hear a diversity of perspectives, including those with which our members may not agree. Our Executive Director, Dr. Gillian Schauer, along with our CANNRA Executive Board Members (who are all current cannabis and

cannabinoid regulators) have set out strict ethical parameters for our work. Furthermore, our Executive Director, Dr. Schauer, spent 15 years of her career focused on tobacco prevention and control and served as a Senior Editor on the 2020 Surgeon General's Report on Smoking Cessation. It is extremely disappointing that this Letter to the Editor spread false information about who CANNRA is and what we do.