

Written Testimony in Support of SB160

Senate Healthcare Committee

February 9, 2021

Dear Chair McClendon and Members of the Senate Healthcare Committee,

My name is Melissa Humble. I am a home baker and started my cottage food business last year when I had to stop working to stay home with my partner who is immunocompromised during the pandemic. My business is HumbleBee Bakes in Headland, AL. I produce French macarons and other baked goods. This business provides income for my family. It also helps me combat my depression while staying home during the pandemic. My cottage bakery keeps me busy and allows me to safely interact with my community, both of which I dearly miss.

I support SB160 because it will help my family and other families in Alabama recover from the pandemic.

Selling cottage foods has provided helpful income during the pandemic. My partner who is immunocompromised has been able to work from home. I am a photographer and a teacher, both professions that require a lot of personal interaction. When the pandemic began, together we made the decision that I would not work traditionally during the pandemic. I haven't worked full-time in a year, but I was able to start my cottage food business to earn income during this time.

Being able to start a business under the cottage law has helped me pay my bills and feel like I'm a contributing member of society. But with the current revenue cap, I need to work at least two jobs to make a living. If I could earn more revenue, I would have the opportunity to grow my business and hire employees, providing jobs for more people. Similarly, allowing online sales and shipping would give me the opportunity to increase revenue and job opportunities. In December alone, over twenty people requested to purchase my baked goods and have them shipped, but I had to turn them away because of the way the law is written. I lost \$400 in sales.

The proposed reforms will allow me to expand my business and help take care of debt I've taken on during the pandemic. I think many people feel similarly and would greatly benefit from these reforms.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I ask that you please support this important reform.

Sincerely,

Melissa Humble