

Date: _____

The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

The Honorable _____.

This letter is to respectfully ask you to support legislation for the purpose of making marijuana legal for medical treatment. This issue is extremely important to my family and an estimated 1.7 million other Floridians who are seriously ill.

There is an overwhelming amount of medical evidence supporting this legislation. The Florida Supreme Court ruled in 1991 that an AIDS couple were within their rights to grow and use marijuana. According to an AARP poll in 2004, 72% of Americans believe this medicine should be available to those who have a medical need. A schedule 1 substance is defined as no medicinal value and that is obviously not an accurate description of this plant. We have a growing elderly population who needs an affordable medication. This medicine is completely natural and patients can grow their own. Thirteen U.S. states have now made marijuana legal for medical treatment, and 9 more states are considering the move.

This plant has documented medicinal use for over 5,000 years. In 1970 the federal government labelled it a schedule 1 substance. Studies that have shown marijuana can halt the spread of many types of cancers, including brain, breast, lung, prostate and pancreatic cancers. The application most known is pain management, but less known is the usefulness in treating muscle spasms, as the case with Parkinson's, muscular dystrophy, and multiple sclerosis. Cancer patients are prescribed this medicine for treating nausea, reducing pain, and stimulating the appetite during chemotherapy treatments. Some of the other serious illnesses that are treated with this medicine are AIDS, Alzheimer's, rheumatoid arthritis, and glaucoma. According to doctors, marijuana is considered safer than pharmaceutical drugs, has virtually no side effects, and is has no addictive compounds. There has never been a reported case of an overdose. The lethal-to-effective-dose ratio is 40,000 to 1, that of aspirin is 10 to 1. Why does marijuana work when other pharmaceutical drugs do not? There are 63 compounds in marijuana and only three of them can be duplicated.

The financial benefits are just as stunning. Medical marijuana is a multi-billion dollar a year industry. Florida stands to make over \$200 million in sales tax revenues per year. At the same time, we will experience reduced health care costs and reduced prison expenses. Hundreds of new businesses will be created employing tens of thousands of people. In the states that have implemented this legislature, there has been no backlash reported. In fact, crime rates have decreased in some areas. The state will certify grow houses, which moves them out of our neighborhoods and into safer industrial warehouses. This legislation will not excuse or cause recreational use. It will simply help the law abiding citizens with serious illnesses obtain their medicine properly. There is no evidence that this is a 'gateway drug' as some people would want us to believe. Those are old thoughts for an old generation. The time for change is upon us.

It is imperative we get this medicine to people who are in need and end the suffering. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name Printed

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code