



The Texas Compassionate Use Program to Should be More Inclusive

Physicians could recommend cannabis to a qualified patient, and would work with the patient to determine the best CBD:THC ratio for each unique individual and their medical condition.

Qualifying medical cannabis patients would have to have one of the specifically listed debilitating medical conditions, a written certification by their physician, and formal authorization by the Department of Public Safety.

Seriously ill patients who are properly authorized would be included in the Compassionate Use Program and could procure cannabis medicine from state licensed dispensaries.

Independent laboratories would be licensed and regulated, providing consumer protection with regard to potency and contaminants. Labeling and packaging standards promote safety.

Cannabis business licensing fees must be reasonably assessed, protecting small business access to the market and patient access to cannabis medicine.

Voters support allowing the compassionate use of medical marijuana

84% percent of Texas voters,¹ and more than 90% of Americans, believe seriously ill patients should be allowed to use marijuana medicinally if their doctors recommend it.² The government should not get between a patient and a doctor.

68% of Americans live in a state or district with medical marijuana

Currently 33 states, including conservative states like Utah, Arkansas, North Dakota, Arizona, Montana, Nevada, and Florida — as well as every state surrounding Texas — have workable laws that protect medical marijuana patients from criminal penalties.³ Texas is not included in this number because its law has a fatal flaw — it requires doctors to illegally “prescribe” marijuana and, like 15 other states, its law is limited to low-THC preparations.

¹ University of Texas/Texas Tribune Poll, June 2018

² Quinnipiac University Poll, August 2017, https://poll.qu.edu/images/polling/us/us08032017_Ujm62prt.pdf/

³ <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/state-medical-marijuana-laws.aspx>

The medical community recognizes the importance of access

Medical marijuana is proven to be effective in the treatment of a variety of debilitating medical conditions. In its 1999 report, the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine reported, "Nausea, appetite loss, pain and anxiety are all afflictions of wasting, and can be mitigated by marijuana." Many other medical organizations and physicians have recognized marijuana's medical benefits,⁴ including:

- The Epilepsy Foundation
- The American Nurses Association
- The American Public Health Association
- The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Arthritis Research Campaign
- The Lymphoma Foundation of America
- The American College of Physicians
- The National Nurses Society on Addictions
- Texas Nurses Association
- The majority of doctors responding to WebMD survey in 2014.⁵

Medical cannabis access for those with debilitating conditions is not a partisan issue

Both Texas Republicans and Democrats include in their party platforms include support for medical cannabis.

Republican Party Platform 2018 - Compassionate Use Act: "We call upon the Texas Legislature to improve the 2015 Compassionate Use Act to allow doctors to determine the appropriate use of cannabis to certified patients."

Democratic Party Platform 2018 - Cannabis: "The immediate legalization of medical cannabis use, and ensure coverage for medical cannabis..."

Marijuana is less harmful than many prescription medications

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drug overdose death rates in the United States have more than doubled between 1999 and 2013.⁶ In 2013, over 22,500 people died in the U.S. from drug overdoses related to pharmaceuticals.⁷ By contrast, medical marijuana is a safer alternative and can even reduce reliance on prescription painkillers. No one has ever fatally overdosed on marijuana.⁸

⁴ <https://www.mpp.org/issues/medical-marijuana/medical-marijuana-endorsements-and-statements-of-support/>

⁵ R. Scott Rappold, "Legalize Medical Marijuana, Doctors Say in Survey," WebMD website, April 2, 2014, <http://www.webmd.com/news/breaking-news/marijuana-on-main-street/20140225/webmd-marijuana-survey-web>

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Vital Statistics System mortality data. (2015) Available from URL: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/deaths.htm>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Collen. "Prescribing Cannabis for Harm Reduction," *Harm Reduction Journal*, 2012, <http://www.harmreductionjournal.com/content/9/1/1>, citing Carter GT, Flanagan AM, Earleywine M, Abrams DI, Aggarwal SK, Grinspoon L, "Cannabis in palliative medicine: improving care and reducing opioid-related morbidity," *Am J Hosp Palliat Care*, 2011, 28: 297-303.