

Thank you for allowing a quick hearing so HB 1535 can advance to the Senate Floor!

There were amendments made to the bill, which we believe should be reconsidered.

Reinstate Chronic Pain - Chronic pain includes only those who are experiencing extended pain for more than 3-6 months. According to the CDC¹ and the DEA², no one has ever fatally overdosed from THC, while over 45,000 Americans die every year from opioid overdose. **Only specialists will be able to prescribe medical cannabis.**

Cannabis is often a safer alternative to opioids.

- Cannabis is a promising alternative to opioids and findings support the medical use of cannabis as a safer first-line pharmacological treatment for chronic pain compared to opioids.³
- Medical marijuana patients were positive about the health benefits they received and the fact they were able to reduce or eliminate many prescription medications; however, there were concerns about the costs.⁴
- A study found that patients reported that **cannabis was a useful adjunct and substitute for prescription opioids** in treating their chronic pain and had the added benefit of improving the ability to function and quality of life.⁵



SAFE & EFFECTIVE OPIOID ALTERNATIVE

Since you cannot have a fatal overdose of cannabis based medicine, cannabis is a significantly safer alternative to many medications, including opioids. Data showing efficacy for medical cannabis blankets the journals of almost all medical specialties. Doctors now consider it a medicine, and we need legislation to adapt to healthcare. Please help us help Texans by providing more inclusive access for our patients.

— Robert S. Marks, M.D. (Pain Specialist)

Cancer patient with pain caused from tumors. Doctor has recommended 10 mg THC 3x a day as needed for pain.

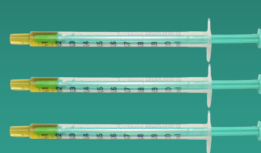
Daily dose with the current 0.5% THC cap

Patient must ingest 2 full syringes 3x a day to achieve their daily dose.



Daily dose with a 5% THC cap

Patient would only need to take .2 mL 3x a day to achieve their daily dose of THC.



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THC % - The percentage change will not affect the amount of THC a doctor prescribes to their patient, instead it affects the amount of carrier oil they must take. Large amounts of carrier oil have harsh digestive side-effects. An increase in THC percentage means a reduction in the amount of carrier oil, which will make for more effective medicine. This necessitates the adjustment from 0.5% to 5% THC. It also decreases the cost of medicine for patients.

Empower DSHS - With the Legislature in session once every two years, it is important to allow doctors and regulators to improve the program as needed. An important part is allowing the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to add conditions via an administrative process. This prevents patient suffering as they wait for another session and allows doctors to practice medicine.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/otherdrugs.html#marijuana>

² <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Marijuana-Cannabis-2020.pdf>

³ "Is Cannabis a Safer and Equally Effective Medication for the Treatment of Chronic Pain as Compared with Opioids?" Nedelman, Loren. Walden University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2020. 27998743.

⁴ "Mixed methods study of the potential therapeutic benefits from medical cannabis for patients in Florida", *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, Volume 57, March 2021.

⁵ "A Survey on the Effect That Medical Cannabis Has on Prescription Opioid Medication Usage for the Treatment of Chronic Pain at Three Medical Cannabis Practice Sites", Published: December 02, 2020.



Coalition of Texans
with Disabilities