



Allegheny County Council

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Legislation Text

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Expressing the Sense of Council of Allegheny County calling for the General Assembly to support legislation allowing for the compassionate use of marijuana for legitimate medical purposes.

WHEREAS, the legalization of state regulated marijuana sales continues to be a controversial matter, and the Compassionate Use Medical Marijuana Act (House Bill 1663) has recently been reintroduced in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, which has the support of a broad majority of Pennsylvania's population; and

WHEREAS, this bill limits the legal sale of marijuana to people who have a recommendation of the medical doctor and provides for a limited number of compassion centers throughout Pennsylvania to sell it; and

WHEREAS, the American College of Physicians urges review of marijuana's status as a schedule I controlled substance and its reclassification into a more appropriate schedule, given the scientific evidence regarding marijuana's safety and efficacy in some clinical conditions; and

WHEREAS, former US Surgeon General, Joycelyn Elders stated that "the evidence is overwhelming that marijuana can relieve certain types of pain, nausea, vomiting and other symptoms caused by such illnesses as multiple sclerosis, cancer and AIDS, or by the harsh drugs sometimes used to treat them. And it can do so with remarkable safety adding that marijuana is less toxic than many of the drugs that physicians prescribe every day." and

WHEREAS, proponents of medical marijuana, including doctors argue that it can be a safe and effective treatment for the symptoms of cancer, AIDS, multiple sclerosis, pain, glaucoma, epilepsy, and other conditions. They cite dozens of peer-reviewed studies, prominent medical organizations, major government reports, and the use of marijuana as medicine throughout world history; and

WHEREAS, Lester Grinspoon, MD, Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, wrote that studies have led "to what medicine already knew but had largely forgotten or ignored: Marijuana is effective at relieving nausea and vomiting, spasticity, appetite loss, certain types of pain, and other debilitating symptoms, [a]nd it is extraordinarily safe, safer than most medicines prescribed every day,[and] if marijuana were a new discovery rather than a well-known substance carrying cultural and political baggage, it would be hailed as a wonder drug." ; and

WHEREAS, if passed in Pennsylvania, patients suffering from cancer, chemotherapy side-effects, AIDS-related anorexia, epilepsy and other neurological disorders who are today barred from effective marijuana-based therapies would have ready access at home to treatment under their physicians' care

WHEREAS, such legislation would also benefit children who suffer from severe epilepsy as cases have been cited of medical cannabis in prescribed liquid drops have reduced seizures among these children; and

WHEREAS, 20 States, and Washington DC, have legalized marijuana for medical use and nine additional states have pending legislation considering the proposition including neighboring states of West Virginia and Ohio; and

WHEREAS, such legislation would satisfy the current sentiment of the American public as shown by a Gallup poll conducted last year in which a clear majority of Americans (58 percent) stated that they favored legalization;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY,

Calls for the General Assembly to support legislation allowing for the compassionate use of marijuana for legitimate medical purposes.

PRIMARY SPONSOR: COUNCIL MEMBER ROBINSON