

**TESTIMONY in support of HB6715:
An Act Concerning Palliative Marijuana
February 26, 2007**

Doctors currently prescribe medicines to their patients which are legal but may be addictive. Why not include marijuana in the list of medicines which doctors have discretion to recommend when they conclude that it will help ease the symptoms suffered by their seriously ill patients? While Marinol is helpful to some patients, there are others who get much better results from smoking marijuana, particular those who have difficulty with ingesting food and drugs. Why make these individuals suffer, or risk arrest?

In the past, we heard opponents of medical marijuana expressing a fear that it is a step toward legalizing all marijuana or that the marijuana grown by or for patients will be shared with others. Do they not realize that marijuana is already easily obtained by those who either want it or need it? But we don't want sick people to be forced to get it illegally. The point with this bill HB6715 is to protect very sick people who were not sufficiently helped by other drugs, for whom marijuana can relieve their suffering. This is a separate issue from the question of whether marijuana use in general should be illegal or legal. We ask CT legislators to not mix up these two issues and to approve this legislation to allow doctors to recommend to their patients whatever would alleviate their suffering and to protect the patients from prosecution.

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