

117 Old Nod Road
Clinton, CT 06413
March 7, 2012

RE: Raised Bill #5389 – An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana

Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my support for Raised Bill 5389, An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana.

My husband is the strongest, most courageous man I have ever known. Nearly 3 years ago, he was seriously injured in an accident at work and has dauntlessly endured multiple surgeries and medical procedures, physical therapy, physical limitations, and forced retirement with his head high and his spirit intact. Every day is a testament to his perseverance and strength.

My heart breaks, though, that he is a man who is in constant pain. He has a wonderful doctor who does his best to prescribe medication to alleviate my husband's pain, but this treatment plan is not sufficient. My husband's pain is unpredictable. He takes his pain medication as prescribed, at regular intervals throughout the day, whether he is in pain at that moment or not. When his pain heightens, it might be at the tail end of a dosage cycle, so his pain is not relieved by the medication as much as it could be, but still he must wait until the end of the 6-hour cycle before he can take more medication. This means he spends most of his day in pain and waiting for relief.

He also spends his days medicated. He is not able to do many of the things he used to do because of his injury-related physical limitations but also because of his constantly being under the influence of narcotics or opiates. He is now undergoing treatment, including psychotropic medication, for depression, directly related to his quality of life and his sense of hopelessness about any relief from his chronic pain. Chronic pain is different from the pain that most of us know. Having a baby, or having your wisdom teeth pulled, is painful. But when you are going through it, you know that things will be better tomorrow. Imagine not knowing that. Imagine knowing that tomorrow will be the same, and next week, and next year. Imagine knowing that this pain will never stop. That is what my husband knows.

Great strides are constantly being made in medical technology and science. Diseases and conditions that killed our ancestors are now fully treatable and each generation is living longer than the one before it. But the reality is that saving someone's life can bring about a new problem, and that is the quality of that life. For people to have to spend their days wishing for relief from pain is simply not acceptable, when there is a remedy just outside the boundary of law.

I am forever grateful to the wonderful medical people who saved my husband's life, but I wish there was a way to relieve his pain and restore his quality of life. Medical marijuana can do that.

Respectfully,



Ellen S. Burgess