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Committee on Judiciary

Members of the Committee,

I am writing you today to personally express my support of HB 5389 which seeks to allow the use of marijuana for medical purposes. My support comes with the urging that the legislature considers eventually removing all regulations and restrictions on Marijuana to stop the drug war we have going on and to allow an easily grown plant that has many benefits and few problems when compared to the drugs prescribed by doctors daily to be ingested freely by the free men and women in this state.

I have personally witnessed good people living through unnecessary pain and discomfort due to medical problems and injuries and their reluctance to use opiate based medications for fear of dependence and the many side effects. I have experienced acquaintances that became addicted to opiate based narcotics because they were legal while the less harmful alternative of Marijuana was readily available but would subject them to being made a criminal by our state. I also know a person who lived with persistent and terrible pain who tried unsuccessfully to take his own life (again making their quality of life drastically worse) when the narcotics the doctor prescribed were not easing the pain any longer and the heavy amounts of legally prescribed opiates they were ingesting were causing severe side effects that made their life worse than before the drugs.

Those same people would regularly speak fondly to me of Marijuana and its effects on pain relief.

Many people who live with persistent pain would greatly appreciate a drug with such few side effects and dependency problems as Marijuana and the benefits of the research and free market that could follow as the state relaxed the laws and regulations around the Marijuana industry. Dispensaries and cultivations in California after their medical Marijuana laws were enacted have been a great example of this evolution.

There is a significant problem with the treatment of persistent and permanent pain in this country. We have made a rather harmless drug like Marijuana illegal and we have kept legal drugs that are terribly addictive and extremely harmful. The majority of these drugs are opiates. We have a growing epidemic in this country of prescription pain medication abuse and much of it is based on need, not greed or a desire to 'get high'. This has many causes and plenty of solutions. Unfortunately, most of the solutions that have been presented or implemented in the past have caused extreme harm and suffering to people with persistent pain by making helpful medications harder to obtain. The right solution is to allow people to freely grow and ingest a plant. That sounds rather reasonable to me.

Respectfully,



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